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PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Thursday, June 15, 2006 ★★ 6 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 187 P18 website: www.inq7.net

SC scolds Ombudsman: Act on Mega Pacific by June 30

By Armand N. Nocum

THE SUPREME COURT CASTIGATED THE OFFICE of the Ombudsman yesterday for "holler(ing) so brashly" about its constitutional independence, while conveniently "shirking" its duty "to act promptly" on complaints filed before it.

The censure was contained in a four-page resolution that reiterated the tribunal's order for the

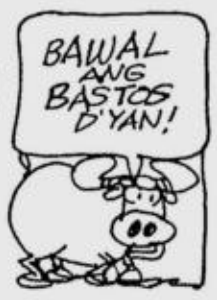
SC SCOLDS/ A9

A first: 93-min movie shot with mobile phone camera

ROME—THE THEME IS familiar to many independent movies—explicit chat about love and sex. But the tool used to shoot an Italian feature-length documentary is new—a standard cell phone camera.

Italian directors have

A FIRST/ A9



Accused didn't even know 'Nicole's' name

US allows agents to testify in Subic rape trial

By Volt Contreras and Nikko Dizon

MARINE LANCE CPL. DANIEL Smith was "authorized" by his superior officer to take the Filipino woman now accusing him of rape out of a popular Subic bar.

The testimony was given yesterday by Guy Papageorge, one of four agents of the US Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) earlier barred by the US Embassy from appearing at the Makati Regional Trial Court on grounds of diplomatic immunity.

Papageorge interviewed Smith about 24 hours after the alleged rape on the night of Nov. 1, 2005.

As it turned out, Smith did not even get the woman's name.

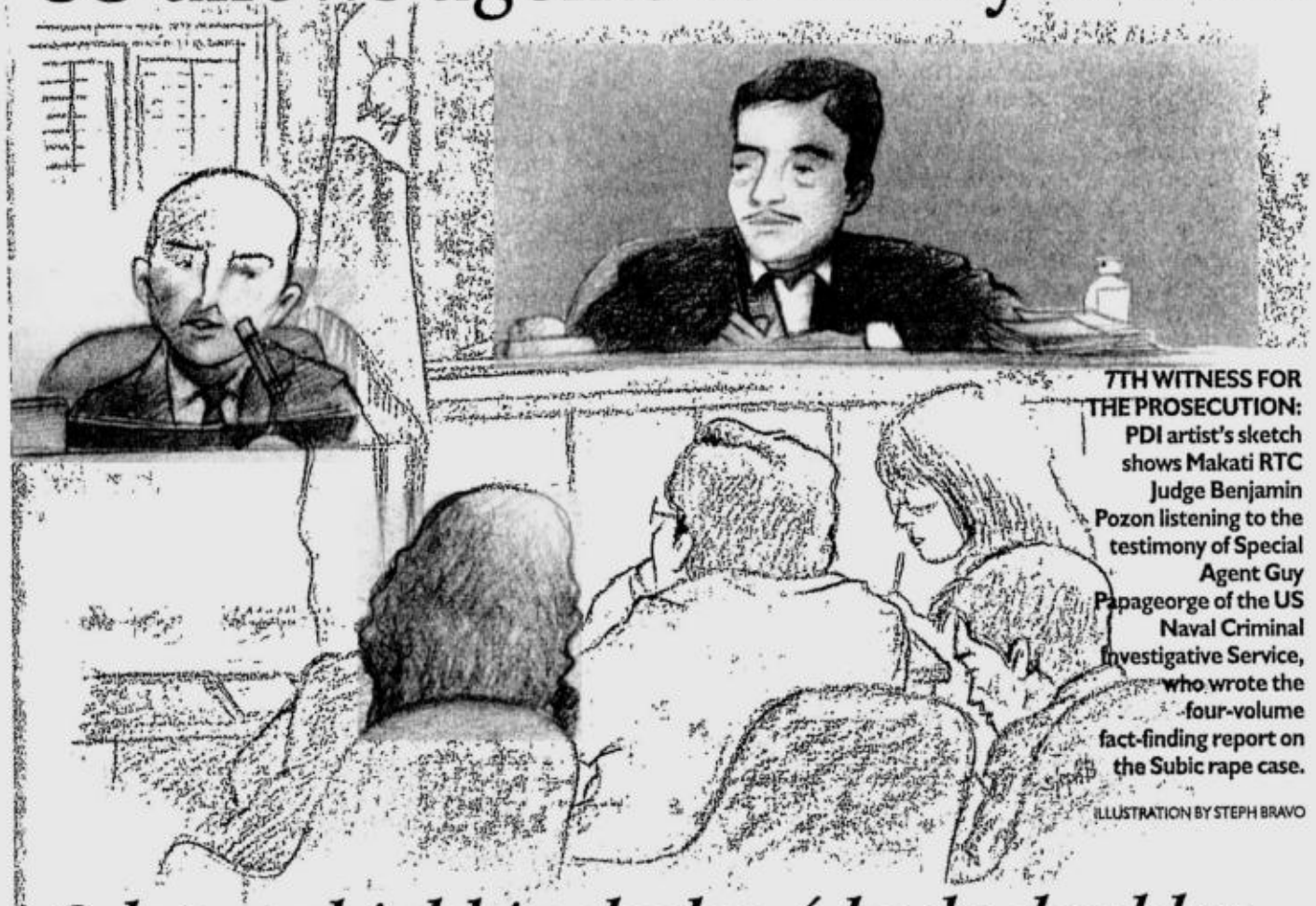
While claiming he had "consensual sex" with the woman, Smith referred to her only as "an Asian female."

Smith was authorized by his superior officer and now coaccused, Staff Sgt. Chad Carpentier, to bring the "intoxicated" woman out of the Neptune Bar and into a hired van where the alleged rape took place amid cheers from Carpentier and two other Marines, Papageorge told the court.

In a complete turnaround, the US government allowed the NCIS investigators to testify at the rape trial.

"Consistent with our commitment to seeing that justice is served in a fair and impartial trial, the government of the United States has agreed to allow several US government employees to testify at the trial of four US Marines accused of rape,"

ACCUSED/ A4



7TH WITNESS FOR THE PROSECUTION: PDI artist's sketch shows Makati RTC Judge Benjamin Pozon listening to the testimony of Special Agent Guy Papageorge of the US Naval Criminal Investigative Service, who wrote the four-volume fact-finding report on the Subic rape case.

ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

3-layer shield includes 4 body doubles

By Tarra V. Quismundo

A "WOMEN'S SHIELD" PROTECTS "Nicole" every time she walks into court in the glare of media cameras to pursue her charge of rape against four US Marines.

The cordon organized by Task Force Subic Rape (TFSR), a multisectoral confederation of women's groups campaigning for justice for Nicole, has been her constant companion in her public appearances.

"The shield is meant to give her physical, psychological and emotional security," said TFSR member Yuen Abana. "Because of that [security], she feels that she is surrounded not only by women who are protecting her physically but also by the spirit of gender justice," Abana said.

The three-layer shield is composed of 14 women of Nicole's age (22), height and build, explained Lotlot Requizo, a TFSR member who has been with Nicole since her first appearance at the

3-LAYER/ A4

Senate finds massive cheating in '04 election

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

INITIAL FINDINGS OF THE SENate defense committee's inquiry into the "Hello Garci" controversy indicate "massive cheating" occurred during the 2004 election and that this benefited President Macapagal-Arroyo, Sen. Rodolfo Biazon said yesterday.

Biazon also said his committee's initial findings showed that the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp) had wiretapped Garcillano's cell phone. It remained unclear, however, why and who ordered the wiretap. Biazon declined to answer these questions.

In an exclusive interview with the INQUIRER, Biazon said oral and written evidence submitted to the committee during its five hearings last year showed that at least 662,000 votes were added in favor of Ms Arroyo.

"Was there massive cheating?" Biazon, committee chair, asked rhetorically.

"Why, yes!" he exclaimed, pointing to the alleged padded votes. "There was cheating and definitely the beneficiary was the cheater."

Biazon shared with the INQUIRER the gist of what the interim report would have contained had he issued it before the Senate adjourned on June 8.

SENATE/ A8

Phivolcs lists quake scenarios

By Blanche S. Rivera

A 7.2-MAGNITUDE EARTHQUAKE hitting Metro Manila would kill 51,500 people and injure 114,000.

More than a third of the houses in the metropolis would suffer slight or severe damage, while about a third of all high-rise structures and public buildings, including government offices, schools and hospitals, would be damaged.

Such is the worst of 18 strong-earthquake scenarios painted by the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) in a study to determine the impact of earthquakes in Metro Manila.

Such a scenario could be caused

PHIVOLCS/ A8

Police rule out terrorists, Reds in Metro blasts

By Luige A. del Puerto

POLICE YESTERDAY BLAMED the series of explosions in Metro Manila on destabilization forces, saying the aim was to "discredit and embarrass" not only the Philippine National Police but ultimately the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

But no evidence was offered to back the claim, and investigators have yet to identify the people behind the "Taong Bayan at Kawal," the little-known group that claimed responsibility for the attacks that injured no one.

"Certainly, these are acts that tend to discredit not only the police but also the administration," said PNP Director Marcelo Ele Jr., chief of the Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management and head of the inquiry into the blasts.

Ele said that traces of the high-explosive TNT had been found in the bombing sites in Quezon City and Camp Bagong Diwa, and that it was likely only one group had carried out the two attacks.

But he ruled out the involvement of "established terror groups" Jemaah Islamiyah and the Abu Sayyaf, as well as the Communist Party of the Philippines.

Ele said the bombs used had ordinary time fuses and were not triggered by remote control, mobile phones or pagers.

Police had said in the past that only a few groups could carry out bomb attacks using TNT and C-4, powerful explosives found in the

POLICE/ A8

'HE'S MY BROTHER'

Teeners learn to hug, love street kids even if they smell

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

DAGUPAN CITY—THE NIGHT Gale Serafica, 15, and Shirley Carrera, 17, first approached some street children in this city, they were so nervous and embarrassed.

"We did not know how they would react to us, if they would welcome our friendship or not. We were afraid some of our classmates would see us and wonder why we were mingling with dirty and smelly children," they recalled of their first "assignment" to "socialize" with street children.

As it turned out, the children were friendly and welcomed the attention.

"They are easy to get along with. In five to 10 minutes, we became friends and we started playing," Serafica said.

Serafica and Carrera belong to a group of youth volunteers called Aguik Ya (My Sibling), a street-based education project of the Liwawa ed Asinan Foundation (LEAF) Inc. which was started in July last year.

Their identification cards bear the phrase, "He ain't heavy, he's my brother," and a photograph of a butterfly, which, they said, symbolizes hope.

The youngest volunteer is a 12-year-old girl.

Lina Tan, LEAF executive director, said Aguik Ya aims to reduce the number of street children in the city by taking care of their basic needs and giving them education, love and attention.

Dealing with the children was an eye-opener for LEAF volunteers, most of them high school and college students.

"I thought those kinds of lives are only seen in the movies or soap operas. Their stories are re-

TEENERS/ A4

NEVER TOO LATE TO LEARN THE 3Rs: The elderly of the Dumagat tribe together with their children in the mountains of Sta. Inez, Sampaloc, Quezon, dialogue with a school principal on their urgent concern of learning to write, read and count. She promised to send them a teacher.

EDWIN BACASMAS

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

THURSDAY, JUNE 15, 2006

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONTPAGE

Text us your feedback: inquirer news name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern and Central Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of Luzon will be partly cloudy to at times cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening

COMPILED BY KATE V. PEDROSO, PDI RESEARCH/06/14/06 SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Erap admits having P56M in undeclared bank accounts

By Nelson F. Flores

DEPOSE PRESIDENT JOSEPH ESTRADA YESTERday admitted holding several undeclared bank accounts containing more than P56 million in deposits, but insisted these were campaign funds which he was just holding in trust.

Estrada, rebutting perjury charges for not declaring the deposits in his statement of assets, liabilities and net worth, explained that he did not declare the deposits in his 1998 SALN because the money belonged to the Partido ng Masang Pilipino, the political party that catapulted him to power.

"Those are political contributions. It's not my money," Estrada said, adding that the accounts with the banks where all under his name in trust for the PMP.

During cross-examination at the Sandiganbayan Special Division, the 69-year-old Estrada said P44 million was deposited in Keppel Bank and P12.9 million in Security Bank.

He would not say where the money came from, insisting "the donors wanted to remain anonymous. We did not give out receipts for them. They don't want to be known."

Estrada's lawyer Jose Flaminiano said there was "no impropriety" in him holding the money in trust, adding that other members of the party knew about the arrangement.

Estrada said the party treasurer, lawyer Manuel Zamora, and other PMP officials were aware of the money's existence.

Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio questioned Estrada over possible perjury charges for not truthfully declaring his assets.

"He is admitting that there are many business concerns he has not included in the statement of assets and liabilities and net worth in 1998. That's perjury," said State Prosecutor Dennis.

But Villa-Ignacio doubted Estrada's claim the money was part of campaign contributions, saying the Commission on Elections was never informed and there were no documents to back up.

Villa-Ignacio also confronted the former President with a list of nine corporations that were also not declared in his SALN.

Villa-Ignacio alleged that Estrada lied in his 1998 SALN when he declared that his net worth was only P37 million and that he had business interests in only three corporations.

Estrada replied that he did not declare them in his SALN because these corporations were no longer in operation as early as when he was still mayor of San Juan.

Republic Act No. 6713 (the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees) requires all government officials and employees to file their SALN annually.

Villa-Ignacio expressed confidence that he did good in making Estrada admit his undeclared assets.

But Flaminiano noted that the prosecution failed to prove anything during the entire proceeding except to show that the former President was sincere and had no criminal intention.

Estrada later told reporters that the perjury charge, which he claimed was fabricated, was resurrected by prosecutors from his impeachment trial in 2000. "They wanted to demonize me. ... I would say that their perjury charge is very weak," Estrada said.

As in the past, Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson attended yesterday's hearing despite the bid of the defense panel to have Singson barred from hearing the testimony of Estrada.

Meanwhile, Estrada said the recent bombings in and around Metro Manila showed the growing disillusionment of the people with the Arroyo government.

"Surveys show that about 70 percent are after the removal of President Macapagal-Arroyo. Many are now against her, not only civilians but even within the military. So we don't know," Estrada said.

Estrada said people "want to know the truth (but) they barred the truth from coming out in Congress last year. We hope that they will let the truth be known to stop these things (bombings) from happening."

A group calling itself Taong Bayan at Kawal (Masses and Soldiers or TABAK) has claimed responsibility for four recent Metro Manila explosions. *With AP, AFP*

GMA reports P79.2-M net worth

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO HAS NEARly doubled her personal fortune since her term as Vice President, with her net worth reaching almost P80 million last year.

According to an ABS-CBN television report yesterday, citing documents obtained from the Office of the Ombudsman, the President reported a net worth of P79.2 million in 2005.

Although this was 2.4 percent lower than the P81.142 million she reported in 2004, Ms Arroyo's rise in fortunes has been significant since she became President.

According to figures obtained by INQUIRER Research, the President's net worth went up by 18.7 percent, from P69.7 million in 2001, when she was propelled to the presidency during the second Edsa People Power Revolution. It was 90 percent higher than her P41.5 million net worth in 1999 when she was Vice President to deposed President Joseph Estrada.

Ms Arroyo has opted to remain liquid during her time in Malacañang with the bulk of her assets, or P55.4 million, held in cash and bank deposits in 2005. This is 9.4 percent lower than her cash and bank deposits in 2004 (P61.170 million) and slightly higher than the P54.3 million that she had in 2001.

The President and her husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo, reported holding total real estate assets worth P6 million—a house and lot in Baguio City purchased in 1977; a commercial lot in Antipolo City purchased in 1986; a commercial lot purchased in Tayabas, Quezon, in 1995; an agricultural lot in San Rafael, Bulacan, purchased in 1995 and another agricultural lot in Nasugbu, Batangas. The latest acquisition, a P2-million lot in Coron, Palawan, was acquired last year.

The President also reported in her statement of assets and liabilities having P6.8 million worth of cars (unchanged since 2001); P3.4 million in jewelry (from P1.2 million in 2001); P1.4 million as inheritance, and nearly P6 million in furniture, office equipment and books (from P2 million in 2001).

Noticeably absent from the First Couple's SAL, just as in previous years, are the Lourdes Tuazon Arroyo building on Perea St. in Makati; the President's family mansion in Forbes Park; the family residence in La Vista, Quezon City, and the First Gentleman's farm properties in Negros Occidental. *Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.*

SC halts rebellion probe

By Armand N. Nocum

SIX PARTY-LIST CONGRESSMEN and 40 others have scored an initial victory in their efforts to have the rebellion charges against them quashed after the Supreme Court issued a "status quo order," effectively stopping the Department of Justice from further pursuing the case.

In a three-page order dated June 5, the high court's First Division also ordered Senior State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco, head of the five-man panel handling the preliminary investigation of the rebellion case, to comment within 10 days on the petition filed by the accused on April 17.

The court enjoined the DOJ from proceeding with the preliminary investigation of the rebellion charges against the six solons and 40 others and ordered that the status quo be maintained effective immediately until further orders from the court.

In their April 17 petition, Representatives Crispin Beltran (Anakpawis), Satur Ocampo (Bayan Muna), Rafael Mariano (Anakpawis), Teodoro Casiño (Bayan Muna), Liza Maza (Gabriella) and Joel Virador (Bayan Muna); Nathaniel Santiago, secretary general of Bayan; Vicente Ladlad, former secretary of the CPP's Southern Tagalog Regional Party Committee and presently the executive director of the party-list group Bayan Muna, and militant leaders Randall Echanis and Rey Claro Cambre asked the court to issue a temporary restraining order (TRO) enjoining the DOJ from proceeding with the preliminary investigation of the rebellion cases filed against them.

They also asked the court to set aside the DOJ order issued on March 22 denying their motion seeking to inhibit DOJ officials from conducting a preliminary investigation citing its "lack of impartiality."

However, since the preliminary investigation had been wrapped up by the DOJ and rebellion charges have been filed before the Makati Regional Trial Court against the accused, SC spokesperson Ismael Khan said the lower court should also stop its proceedings "in compliance with the spirit of the status quo order."

The party-list congressmen sought the dismissal of the charges against them, saying the evidence presented by the Philippine National Police-Criminal Investigation Division Group was "hearsay, spurious, unauthenticated and inadmissible."

The accused said the evidence presented by the PNP was composed of recycled printed propaganda materials, news releases, documents of legal mass organizations and copies of downloaded articles retrieved from the anti-insurgency section of the military.

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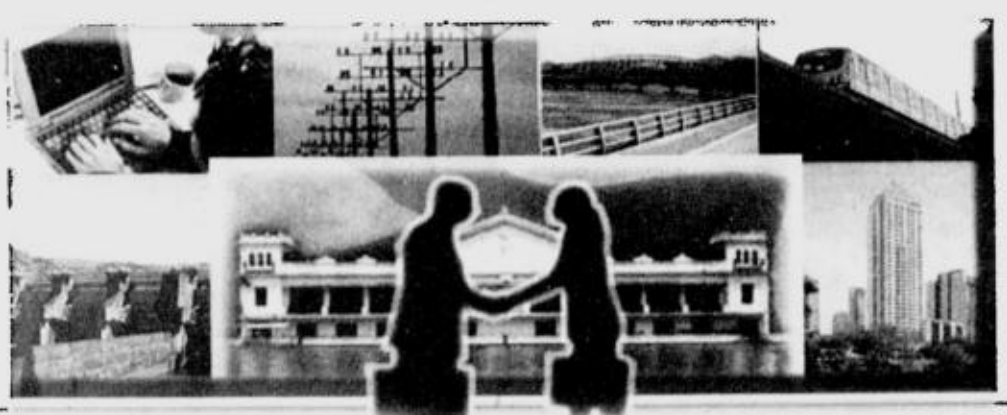

BUSINESS ESSENTIALS IN GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

8:00AM TO 5:30 PM * PENINSULA HOTEL, MAKATI CITY, PHILIPPINES * JUNE 30, 2006

Course Description: This is an "*everything-you-need-to-know*" about the intricacies of crafting contracts if you wish to do (or are doing) business with the government. The lecture will discuss must-haves and caveats in government contracts as well as what to do when you are stuck in a bad deal. It will also include actual lessons from the field from experienced practitioners who have forged and implemented successful deals with the government.

Benefits to Participants: The seminar participants will learn the most important aspects when drafting government contracts that will guide them to avoid pitfalls and costly mistakes when doing business with the government. Understanding best practices through actual case studies will equip the participant with a working knowledge to effectively forge a business contract with the government.

Principal Lecturer: **Atty. Jose A. Bernas** - Has extensive experience in dealing with government contracts given his involvements in various industries ranging from real estate and IT to construction and finance. Successfully obtained the annulment of the PIATCO contract in the Supreme Court. Managing Partner, Bernas Law Office. Professorial lecturer in government contracts, Ateneo Law School.

Guest resource speakers who will share their lessons from the field:

1. *Rizalino Gerardo B. Favila, Jr. President, Ayala Systems Technology, Inc.*
2. *Edilberto C. Palisoc EVP & GM, D.M. Consunji, Inc.*
3. *Atty. Patrick F. Advincula – Partner, Zambrano & Gruba Law Offices*

Who Should Attend:

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- Government executives
- Lawyers, Negotiators
- Those doing business with the government
- Anyone who has a problem with a government contract

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BUSINESSWORLD Lawsuit Alternatives POWER BOOKS

Investors laud mine reopening, but environmentalists unhappy

FOREIGN INVESTORS, LOCAL BUSINESS circles and even some labor groups yesterday welcomed the government's decision to allow the Australian company Lafayette Mining Inc. to resume operations initially for a 30-day test run, but environmentalists and some members of the clergy condemned the move.

Malacañang said the reopening of Lafayette's Rapu-Rapu mine in Albay after a closure of seven months due to illegal discharge of toxic mine wastes had lifted a cloud of uncertainty that hung over the country's mining industry and threatened the investment climate.

Trade and Industry Secretary Peter Favila told reporters that foreign investors with whom the President and her economic managers met at the Palace yesterday were unanimous in their appreciation of Department of Environment and Natural Resources' decision to give Lafayette 30 days to do a test run.

"They are relieved that finally, reason has prevailed, and they say it's fair to give the mining company a chance to prove themselves within a period of one month, that they can really go about doing responsible mining as is prescribed in the mining act," Favila said.

The reopening of the Rapu-Rapu facility ends months of speculation on the government's policy on mining after the Church stepped up its anti-mining lobby by calling for a ban on mining on Rapu-Rapu Island and a repeal of the Mining Act.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said the DENR should "closely scrutinize the test run by Lafayette to enable the government to come up with a more definitive decision on this issue under the standards of full transparency and accountability to all stakeholders."

He said the DENR decision did not contradict the recommendations made by the Rapu-Rapu fact-finding body led by Sorsogon Bishop Arturo Bastes. "The DENR test period will allow the government to determine whether Lafayette has complied with the remedial measures required by the committee."

Nonetheless, Bastes said he was disappointed by the decision and described DENR as Lafayette's "partner in crime."

"I'm really disappointed and worried with what happened," he said in a statement released by the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines.

He said the decision "brushed off" the committee's recommendation and what he claimed was the "cry of the people" that Lafayette's operations be shut down permanently. *Gil C. Cabacungan, Norman Bordadora, Christian V. Esguerra*

Fr. Casal, ex-museum director; 67

FATHER GABRIEL CASAL, A FORMER DIRECtor of the National Museum, died yesterday of an apparent heart attack, the Arzobispado de Manila announced. He was 67.

The body of the Roman Catholic priest, who was director of the Manila Archdiocesan Museum and Archives at the time of his death, was found at around noon, said Corazon Yamsuan, media affairs director of the Arzobispado.

"He was supposed to say Mass at the Arzobispado chapel at 11:30 but he did not show up," Yamsuan said. When the Arzobispado staff checked his quarters at the fathers' residence, he was found sprawled in the bathroom, lifeless.

Yamsuan said Casal had a heart bypass years back.

A former Benedictine monk who received his doctorate in Anthropology from the University of the Philippines with a dissertation on the T'boli tribe of Mindanao, Casal became director of the Ayala Museum and later, for 14 years, of the National Museum.

In 1983, Casal left the Benedictine order and was incardinated to the Archdiocese of Manila under then Cardinal Jaime Sin.

Upon his retirement from the National Museum, he worked full time in the Archdiocese of Manila as chair of its commission on cultural heritage and director of archives and museum.

Upon succeeding Cardinal Sin as Manila archbishop, Cardinal Gaudencio Rosales retained Casal. Rosales himself moved the archdiocesan office back to the Arzobispado in Intramuros so that the Arzobispado – and its museum and archives – were refurbished.

Early this year, Rosales released "Living Canopy," an interactive CD produced by Casal and the museum. The CD contains the history and development of the ancient archdiocese, with images and annotations of paintings, busts, markers, capes, carvings and other artifacts in the museum collection. The museum also held an exhibit in connection with the release of the CD.

Casal's remains lie at the Arzobispado. Interment will be announced later. *Lito B. Zulueta*

Phivolcs warns Bulusan eruption is imminent

By Blanche S. Rivera

MT. BULUSAN EXPLODED STEAM and ash into the sky, accompanied by small volcanic quakes, late Tuesday that could signal a "looming hazardous" eruption soon.

"Last night's explosion and relatively voluminous ash emission indicated that Bulusan volcano is undergoing a period of elevated unrest, distinct from the early explosions from March to May," said the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology in a bulletin yesterday.

More ash explosions are expected in the near future considering the heightened level of activity, said Phivolcs, warning residents in nearby areas to take precautions against increased ash fall.

Tuesday's explosion blanketed several villages in Sorsogon with thick ash, clouding visibility and keeping jittery people indoors for hours, officials said.

Spewing since June

The ash was blown by the wind northwest toward the farming towns of Casiguran and Juban, where officials canceled classes in at least nine primary and secondary schools to safeguard more than 2,600 students.

Bulusan has been spewing ash into the air since early June raising fears of a possible eruption.

"The nature of these microearthquakes ... may be associated with magmatic movement" inside the 1,565-meter volcano, said Phivolcs.

Phivolcs chief Renato Solidum noted that the intervals of the eruptions were getting shorter, which could be an indication of an eruption happening soon.

He said magma (hot liquid rock) was certainly rising from the volcano's chamber although there was no evidence that it was very near the surface already.

The area around Bulusan remained on alert level 2, with local governments preparing for an evacuation in case of a hazardous eruption.

10,000 evacuees

Six barangays—Barangays Inlagadian in Casiguran, Puting Sapa and Añog in Juban, Cogon and Mapaso in Irosin and San Roque in Bulusan—are within the 5-km danger zone.

Civil defense officials said that more than 10,000 people could be evacuated if the volcano erupts at full force.

Phivolcs said residents must stay at least 4 km away from the crater and warned people living in areas near river or stream channels that volcanic deposits on the slopes of the mountain could turn into deadly volcanic mudflows.

Bulusan has erupted 15 times, most recently in November 1994.

Solidum discounted an eruption worse than that of Mt. Pinatubo in 1991, which killed more than 500 people.

"It definitely will not be like Mt. Pinatubo because they have different kinds of rocks," Solidum said.

The composition of magma (molten rock materials) would indicate the strength of a blast.

"There are few volcanos in the country like Mt. Pinatubo" which has basite rocks, he said. Bulusan has mostly non-basite rocks.

The two volcanoes also differ in the extent of the threatened areas.

Solidum said pre-1991 pyroclastic deposits on Pinatubo extended as far as 15 to 20 km. In the case of Bulusan, the deposits from previous explosions were confined within 5 to 6 km.

Mayon, too

He said there would also be fewer people in harm's way in Bulusan as there are hardly any residents within a 4-km radius. But some 45,000 to 50,000 families live 5 to 10 km from the volcano.

Meanwhile another volcano in the region, Mayon, has been showing signs of unrest.

Although no seismic activity has been recorded, ash fall has been experienced in areas near Mt. Mayon, said Ed Laguerta, Phivolcs Legazpi resident volcanologist. *With AP and reports from Bobby Labalan, Ephraim Aguilar, Job Belen, Niño Jesus Orbeta and Bobby Labalan, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau, and Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Kanlaon also emits ash

BACOLOD CITY—MT. KANLAON, A VOLcano in central Negros island, spewed ash that rose as high as 1.5 kms for about two hours yesterday morning but no volcanic earthquakes were recorded.

Ben Tanatan, Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology science research analyst, said the ash fell on the slopes of the volcano and "did not cause any harm."

Tanatan said that at 9:25 a.m., clouds covered the summit of the volcano, making monitoring of the ash emission for the rest of the day impossible.

He said the ash emission was caused by water falling into the hot rocks at the volcano's crater. But since it was not accompanied by a volcanic quake, there was no need to raise Kanlaon's alert levels, he said.

In Pampanga, meanwhile, business leaders are holding today a tribute to national and local officials who led the province out of the disaster of the Mt. Pinatubo eruption in 1991.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, former President Fidel Ramos, Speaker Jose de Venecia, Sen. Manuel Lapid, the late governor Bren Guiao and the late Dr. Raymundo Punongbayan are among those who will be honored by businessmen led by Levy Laus.

"We want to remember that unprecedented catastrophe and celebrate at the same time the triumph of the Kapampangan spirit in the midst of such life-challenging adversity," said Laus, who headed the Save San Fernando Movement.

Rodriguez, the mayor of San Fernando, the capital, said honor should also go to ordinary Kapampangans who overcame the disaster, the worst to hit the province after World War II, through "courage, hard work and deep faith in God and neighbors."

The tribute will be held at site of the dwRW radio station which served as the command and coordination center during the disaster.

Carla P. Gomez PDI Visayas Bureau, and Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

New Comelec commissioner named

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO yesterday named a retired Sandiganbayan justice as the newest commissioner of the Commission on Elections.

The appointment on June 9 of Nicodemo T. Ferrer leaves one vacancy in the seven-member commission.

Prior to Ferrer's appointment, the Comelec had two vacant seats after Mehol Sadain retired and Manuel Barcelona was not reappointed by the President.

The 73-year-old Ferrer, a law graduate of the University of the Philippines, served as a justice of the Sandiganbayan antigraft court from 2000 until his compulsory retirement in August 2002.

A native of San Carlos City, he was a regional trial court judge in Baguio-Benguet and Lingayen, Pangasinan, from 1983 to 2000.

Until his appointment to the Comelec, Ferrer was back at his private law practice and was a dean and law professor at the Virgen Milagrosa University Foundation. *Christine O. Avendaño*

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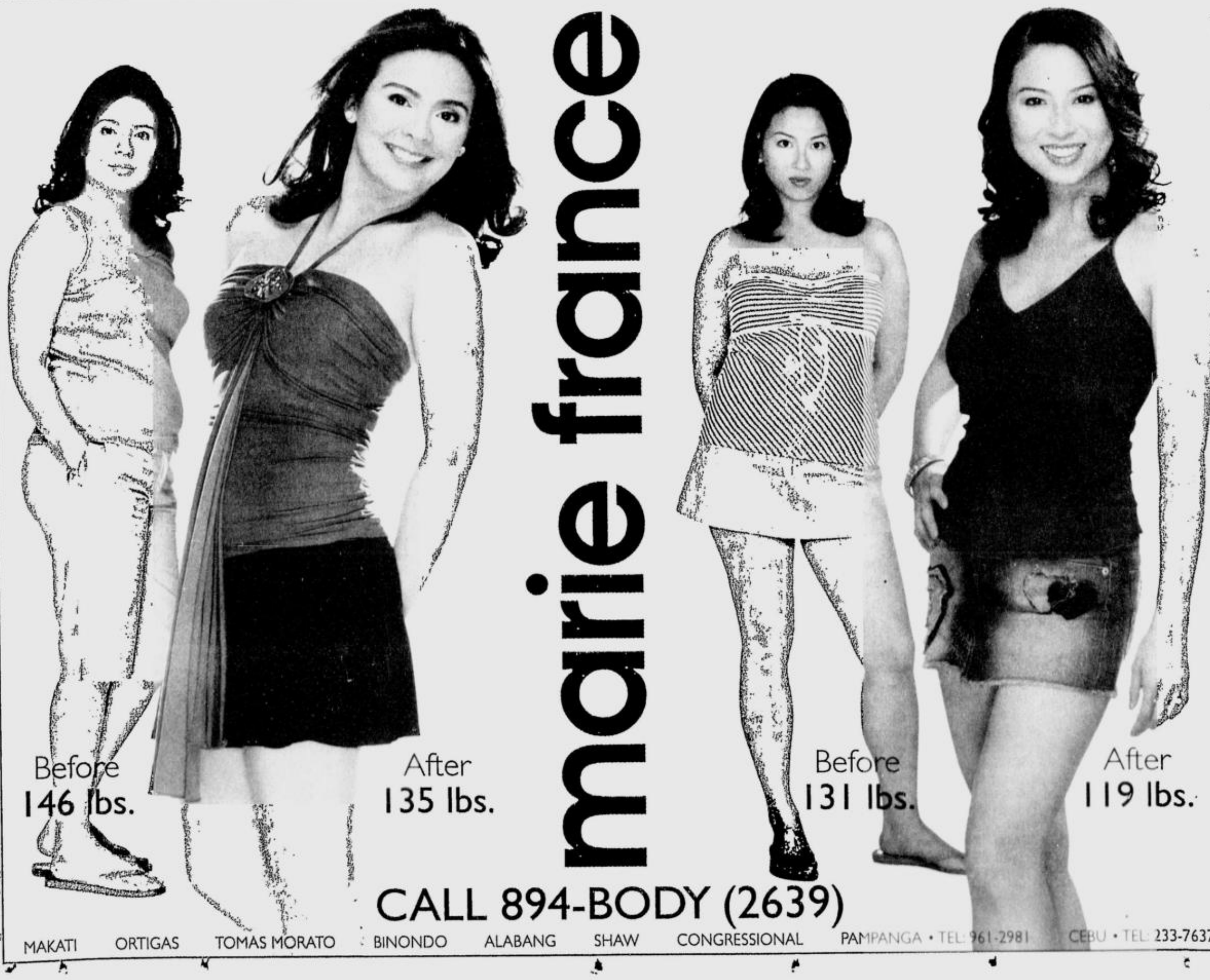

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Accused didn't even know 'Nicole's' name

From page A1

the US Embassy said in a statement issued yesterday.

According to the statement, the US government has waived the diplomatic immunity of two NCIS officials posted at the US Embassy in Manila "for the limited purpose of testifying at this trial."

The two other NCIS employees who participated in the investigation will be asked to come back to the Philippines, the embassy said.

It added: "This decision was made following discussions with the Philippine Department of Foreign Affairs and upon completion of the appropriate steps for requesting court testimony from persons covered by the Vienna Convention."

7th witness

As the seventh witness for the prosecution, Special Agent Papageorge said Smith and Carpentier "admitted" to these acts when he interviewed the two Marines on their docked ship, the USS Essex, between 2 a.m. and 5 a.m. of Nov. 2, 2005.

Papageorge was mainly called to testify on the four-volume fact-finding report he had prepared on the case, compiling his and other interviews conducted by fellow NCIS agents with the suspects and several witnesses.

The report did not contain an interview with the complainant, known as "Nicole."

On direct examination, Papageorge mainly confirmed passages read out and marked by lead public prosecutor Emily Fe de los Santos.

One of the passages stated that Smith had "admitted that the complainant was in the Starex van with the accused and that he had consensual sex with an Asian female inside the van while his buddies cheered on."

When asked by De los Santos what his basis was for putting that account in the report, Papageorge said: "I interviewed Smith and he said he had sexual intercourse with an Asian female. He did not know her name."

5 beers

Carpentier, meanwhile, "admitted he authorized Smith" to bring Nicole out of the Neptune, a nightspot where the woman and the four accused were first seen together, and take her into a hired van, said the report as attested to by Papageorge.

Smith had "five beers" that night when he met the "Asian female, name unknown, who seemed to be intoxicated," it added.

Nicole, again present at the hearing at the Makati RTC Branch 139, was seen covering her face and wiping her eyes with a hand during much of Papageorge's testimony.

NCIS resident agent Ronald Beltz, Papageorge's superior who had begun testifying at the June 5 hearing before the embassy held him and his three colleagues back, also showed up yesterday at the court.

On cross-examination, Papageorge admitted before Smith's defense counsel Benjamin Formoso that the corporal was never made to sign any of the statements attributed to him in the finished report.

This time referring to the handwritten "notes" taken by Papageorge during the Essex interviews, which the agent also presented in court as attachments to the report, Formoso drew Judge Benjamin Pozon's attention to the following scribbling:

- "She liked me" and "Talked and danced for 30 to 40 minutes before we had to leave."
- "We sat at the back of the van. One thing led to another and we had sex."
- "She was a willing partner."

Van driver's statement

Francisco Rodrigo, lawyer for Carpentier, made Papageorge confirm passages from the report that were based on an NCIS interview with Timoteo Soriano, the van's Filipino driver who was initially considered by state prosecutors as an accomplice.

Rodrigo said, reading from the report: "They were dirty dancing and grinding. She was rubbing her crotch area on his legs (and later) rubbed her buttocks on his crotch area."

"(This) appeared to Soriano as though they were simulating sex," he added.

The passages apparently recounted scenes at the Neptune Bar.

Another passage that the defense lawyer tried to highlight said Soriano, while driving the van, also "heard the female (passenger) say 'I'm done.'"

De los Santos tried to cut short Rodrigo's tack with Papageorge, arguing that "character evidence" pertaining to the complainant was "immaterial."

Rodrigo countered by citing the Rules of Court that presenting such evidence could "prove the probability or improbability of the charge."

Judge Pozon upheld Rodrigo and let him continue, saying the defense lawyer was "not after character but what she (the complainant) allegedly did in that instant. The court will allow this."

Compliance

Papageorge took the stand following the decision of the US Embassy to comply with the May 30 subpoena issued by the court to him, Beltz, Tony Ramos and Brian Curly.

During the June 7 hearing, Pozon directed the US Embassy and US military officials to justify their "failure to produce" the four NCIS agents despite the court subpoena.

Pozon likewise "reiterated" the notice to the four agents to attend the hearing scheduled on June 8 and fulfill their obligation to testify.

In its statement yesterday, the US Embassy said the NCIS had provided the Office of the City Prosecutor in Olongapo and the defense lawyers "the entirety of its preliminary written reports beginning in November 2005."

"The US government has worked with Philippine authorities under the precepts of the Visiting Forces Agreement throughout the investigation of this alleged incident, and will continue to do so through the completion of the judicial proceedings," the embassy said.

"The US remains committed to seeing that justice is served, and looks forward to a fair and impartial process that can provide for a just outcome," it added.

Trial objective

DFA spokesperson Gilberto Asuque echoed the US Embassy's statement that its decision would "hopefully lead to the resolution of the case, so that justice is served early."

"That's the objective of this trial, that justice will be served," Asuque said.

"The enforcement as well as the waiver of diplomatic immunity is the prerogative of the sending state," he said, adding:

"The DFA, as representative of the receiving state, would give due recognition to the request of the embassy to grant immunity to any of its officials and staff provided they fall under the Vienna Convention."

Asuque said that based on the DFA Protocol Office, only Beltz had full diplomatic immunity, and another agent had functional immunity.

He said the two other NCIS agents were not on the US government's diplomatic list which, he said, was regularly updated by the sending state, in this case the United States.

Asked who was the NCIS agent with functional immunity, Asuque replied: "Whoever will testify today (yesterday)."

That agent was Papageorge.

THEIR DAY IN COURT: US Marine Lance Cpl. Keith Silkwood (foreground) and, behind, US Marine Staff Sgt. Chad Carpentier with the four probers of the US Naval Criminal Investigative Service leave the Makati RTC Branch 139 on Wednesday. RYAN LIM

3-layer shield includes 4 body doubles

From page A1

Makati Regional Trial Court on June 2.

The 14 were selected from among TFSR member-students.

"We asked her if she had the strength to come out, and she sought help," Requizo said, adding:

"We planned it [and] talked about what we should do two days before her first appearance in court. She requested that she not be identified. That's when we decided that we had to make a cordon to surround her."

Hiding from the press

According to Nicole's support group, shielding her from public view is necessary because identification will inflict on her unnecessary stress and trauma.

"There is nobody else she is hiding from but the press," said Nicole's psychiatrist, Dr. June Pagaduan-Lopez of the Philippine General Hospital.

"First of all, we have to respect her right to privacy and to protect that right," Lopez said. "She has been violated and traumatized … To subject her to further suffering by way of losing her privacy could give her long-term psychological trauma, especially in a society where we have not learned to see a victim as a victim, and which has the tendency to judge her by her character and physical appearance."

Lopez described Nicole as "gathering strength because of the presence of her supporters," and "learning to be strong."

"We are hoping that in time, she will be able to face the press," Lopez added. "But now, we have to realize the stigma placed on a victim. And she's very young. What about her future?"

Body doubles

The first layer of the women's shield—the closest to Nicole—is made up of four lookalikes, who serve as decoys whenever she has to brave the aggressive media.

Requizo said Nicole's body doubles were chosen for their resemblance to the complainant, including their frame, complexion and the length and color of their hair.

To confuse those who wish to single out Nicole from the shield, the decoys wear scarves, jackets and sun glasses—every detail planned painstakingly for each one to look the part.

"She feels emotionally reassured because of the support being given her," said Abana.

Outermost layer

The shield's second ring has five members working together to supervise Nicole's movements as she enters and leaves the courtroom.

This layer directs the whole shield on where to go, said Requizo.

The outermost layer has five women of the heaviest build, deliberately chosen to buffer the core from the expected media assault, she said.

Teeners learn to hug, love street kids even if they smell

From page A1

al," Carrera said, speaking in English and Filipino.

Take the case of 11-year-old Jeena. Her parents are separated and her mother is in jail on illegal drug charges.

Jeena begs and earns about P50 daily, which she uses to buy food for herself and her 6-year-old sister. The two live in a shanty in the city, and Jeena does what her parents should be doing for them—cooking, washing their clothes and looking after her sister.

Rolando Cusi, an employee of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and a volunteer, said the program's operative word was "love."

"Almost all of these street children have dysfunctional families and they lack the love, care and attention that they need most," Cusi, the project officer and volunteer coordinator, said.

Hugging makes difference

"You hug them even if they are smelly and they hug you back. At first, I couldn't breathe because of their stench. But I realized that they lack love and hugging them will make a big difference in their lives. Some of them will even try to get your attention by bullying others," Cusi said.

He said street children feel and act like outcasts but they bask on love and attention from whoever will give it to them.

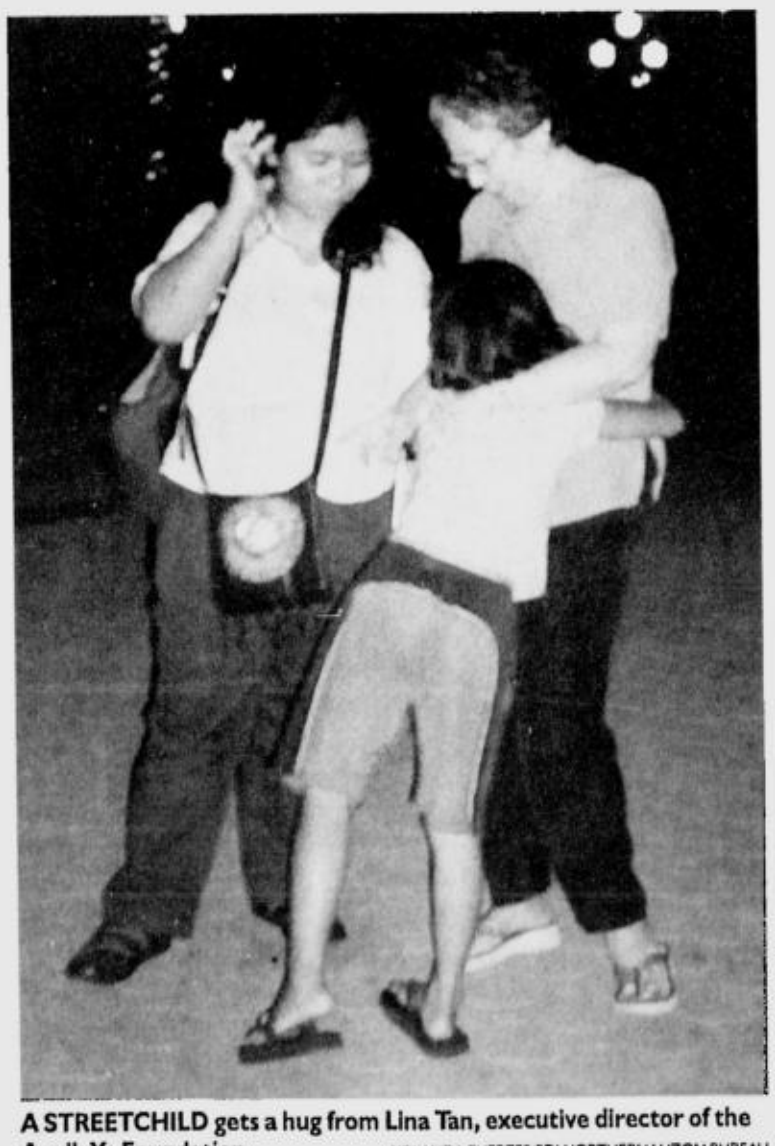
"We want to show the street children that they are part of society," Tan said.

Once, she got angry when she heard of a report that a security guard of the city plaza drove the children away because the plaza, according to the guard, was only for "decent people."

"He earned a lecture from me about children's rights," Tan said. Since then, the children were allowed to roam freely in the park.

Literacy

Another aspect of the Aguik Ya program is literacy.



A STREETCHILD gets a hug from Lina Tan, executive director of the Aguik Ya Foundation. YOLANDA FUERTES/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

The 130 street children under the group's care are classified into "readers" and "nonreaders," and teaching modules have been prepared to suit their needs. The volunteers bring with them teaching materials, like books, pencils, paper and whatever is needed during the group's "literacy hour."

Then there's the personal hygiene part of the project where children are taught to keep themselves clean.

"We have a *'dimpo'* (wash) day," Cusi said. Here the children are given kits containing soap, towel, toothpaste, toothbrush and some used clothing.

The group has also tapped the help of the Pangasinan Medical Society to circumcise the boys and deworm the children.

Medical aid

"We also extend medical help depending on a problem that arises," Tan said.

For instance, some days back, Randy Mislang, 21, a street educator, saw a big wound on the left arm of a girl and she had her treated in a hospital. Another girl, he said, was hit by a rock in her head by a playmate and the wound needed stitching up.

"When we took the girl to her house, her mother, instead of comforting her, hit her in the head," Mislang said.

Still, the children do not speak ill of their mothers, Tan said.

They may say bad things about their fathers but never about their mothers, she said.

Some children have had brushes with the law, a few of them tagged as "recidivists," like 13-year-old Boboy.

The group had intervened thrice to convince the police and village guards not to arrest Boboy.

His first violation was when he was caught begging in a restaurant.

"We reasoned with the police that he did nothing wrong so he was allowed to go. Second, he was accused of being a pickpocket and was taken to a police station in another town. We told the police that he should be in the custody of the Department of Social Welfare and Development. Since there was no case filed, he was again freed but not after being beaten by the police," Cusi said.

Dramatic episode

The third time was nothing short of a television drama episode, he said.

Boboy's brother was accused of stealing a pair of pants from a neighbor and a *tanod* (village guard) picked him up so his mother could bring his brother to the barangay center to return the pants.

"It was my birthday and I was celebrating it with some street children at the LEAF center. Some children arrived and informed us that Boboy was at the barangay center held by the *tanod*. I and (Cusi) decided to go to help him," Tan said.

When the other children learned of the incident, they decided to follow Tan and Cusi to the barangay center.

"It was like a hearing of a case, with us defending Boboy's right as a child, that he must not be hit," Cusi said.

"There was rejoicing among the children when Boboy was set free. The *tanod* apologized to Boboy and to the other children," Tan said.

Cusi, a father of three, said he later learned that the *tanod* suspected him to be a leader of a syndicate victimizing children. He just laughed it off.

Volunteers

The core volunteers are members of a Gospel sharing group based at the office of the LEAF.

When they learned about the project, they readily joined.

The volunteers have to sign a form that indicate how long they would be volunteering. Those below 17 years old need their parents' signatures on the form.

The volunteers undergo orientation seminars and leadership training given by the LEAF before they start working in the streets.

"Not all volunteers are accepted. We check their backgrounds to find out if they are fit to deal with children," said Cusi.

He said the young volunteers were regularly "debriefed" through sharing of their experiences.

Unicef training

Tan, Cusi and the street educators underwent an extensive skills training on street-based education and mobilization for street educators conducted by the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef)-National Council for Social Development.

Each Aguik Ya volunteer allots at least two hours a week for the children, usually late in the afternoon or at night at the city plaza.

"That's the time you will find them in the streets, begging for school money or to buy rice for the family or gambling," Cusi said.

"Some of them are beaten up by their parents when they go home without money," he said.

The Aguik Ya plans to help send some of the children to school so they need not beg anymore.

But another aspect of the problem is how to make the children's parents realize their responsibilities, Cusi said.

"We will try to 'connect' with the parents and work with them," he said.

Corrections

IN THE JUNE 14 ISSUE, a caption of a front-page photo—which previously appeared in the INQUIRER issue on Jan. 12, 1999—misstated that a rally attended by rape victim "Baby" Echegaray, then Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, then First Lady Loi Ejercito, Sen. Jamby Madrigal and other advocates of capital punishment called "for the reimposition of the death penalty." The rally assailed the proposed repeal of the death penalty law and the Supreme Court's stay of execution of convicted rapist Leo Echegaray.

* * *

IN THE FIRST EDITION OF THE SAME ISSUE, a photo caption on Page A1 misstated the province to which the town of Botolan belongs. Botolan is in Zambales—not Zamboanga.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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GM, AMIANAN SM, BIGWAY SM, LUMEN & DOLOR MINIMART 1, LUMEN & DOLOR MINIMART 2, ZENY GROCERY, PEACHIES GROCERY, NEW COMM'L TRADING, WELLMART GROCERY, ABC GROCERY, SDB EVERMART, DOVI GM **ILOILO**: PASSI SUPERMART, ESTANCIA SUPERMART, G & G SUPERMART, LYDES MAIN, LYDES STAR PLAZA, SOCIETY SUPERMART, CITY SQUARE TRADER ILOILO, CITY SQUARE TRADER ROXAS, MARIANING SUPERMART, ALIEN SUPERMART **ISABELA**: TALAVERA SUPERMARKET, FAMILY CHOICE SUPERMARKET, NIKKO'S SUPERMARKET, SM SANTIAGO SUPERMARKET, CHEER'S SUPERMARKET, LYDIA'S SUPERMARKET **LAGUNA**: CASH HYPERMART, SIOLAND SHOPPER SAVER **LAS PIÑAS**: SEVILLA GROCERY **LA UNION**: BAMBI 1 SUPERMART, BAMBI 2 SUPERMART, IB SHOPPER'S MART, JELRA MAIN, JELRA SUPERMART, JRY MART (VACEMART), JT COMMERCIAL, MAGIC SUPERMART **LANAO DEL NORTE**: T-TRADE, METRO GOLD, IGX EXPRESS, JVC SUPERMART, EMILIA SUPERMART **LEYTE**: WILMARS SUPERMART (V&G), BELEN SUPERMART, EKS SUPERMART **MAKATI**: LACS GROCERY **MANDALUYONG**: EPC GROCERY, MARK GROCERY, 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SQUARE, CSI MAIN SUPERMARKET, CSI ALAMINOS, CSI MALASIQUI, CSI SAN CARLOS, CSI LA UNION, CSI LACAO **PARAÑAQUE**: ARISTO MART, SSG SUPERMART, TOP ONE SUPERMART, ANISA-LYN S SUPERMART, PUBLIC MART **PASAY**: EMIE GROCERY, PUBLIC MART **PASIG**: SMART GROCERY **QUEZON CITY**: SAN ROQUE SUPERMARKET, TDC SUPERMARKET, LINDA'S MART, TOP ONE SUPERMART **QUEZON**: SIOLAND (LUCENA), SIOLAND (SARIAYA), SIOLAND (CANDELARIA), SIOLAND (TIAONG), SIOLAND (LUCBAN), SIOLAND (MARINDUQUE), SHOPRITE SUPERMARKET, LA SUERTE SUPERMARKET, ACE SUPERMARKET, MIT MART **RIZAL**: EASTERN SUPERMARKET (TANAY), THRIFT MART 2 (MORONG), THRIFT MART 1 (TERESA), REMPSON SUPERMART (TAYTAY), SAVER'S LANE (TAYTAY), ISLAND SUPERMARKET (BINANGONAN), REMPSON SUPERMARKET (BINANGONAN), HI-WAY SUPERMART (MONTALBAN), PAULINA'S SUPERMART (TAGUIG) **ROMBLON**: R MAGALLANES, MAR GONZALES **SAMAR**: WILMAR'S SUPERMART, BELEN SUPERMART, EKS SUPERMART, LESTERLACE SUPERMART (TACLOBAN) **SAN JUAN**: SWECO MART **SORBOGON**: ROBERTSON 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There could've been fewer poor Pinoys, study says

SOME 2.8 MILLION FILIPINOS would not be poor today had government been consistent in carrying out policies to manage population growth in the past 20 years, according to a study by the Philippine Center for Population and Development and the Asia-Pacific Policy Center.

The government needs to adopt a clearer and firmer direction with respect to the country's high population growth rate, currently pegged at 2.36 percent, according to the APPC which conducted the study.

"Unfortunately, the national government is passing the buck [to local governments] and is not taking an active role to address the issue," said Arsenio M. Balisacan, founder of APPC, at a presentation yesterday.

Population management

The study, commissioned by the PCPD, was intended for local government units (LGUs) which, according to the PCPD, do not realize the benefits of population management because having a large population would mean a bigger share of national tax revenues for them.

Having a young population does not necessarily mean better because a high proportion of young dependents reduces the already low per capita income, said the study which used 2003 data.

APPC simulations show that if the 36 percent ratio of young dependents in 1985 were successfully maintained through rational population policies in 2003, there would be 2.8 million who would not be poor today.

"This corresponds to an average of 156,000 Filipinos taken out of poverty every year beginning 1985," said Dennis S. Mapa, who led the team that conducted the study.

This would have also meant an increase in income per person of about P2,227, he said.

Balicasan said that since the 1970s, population management has taken a "roller coaster ride" through succeeding administrations.

Good population policy

"The policy on population was good during the Marcos years but this died down during Cory [Aquino's] watch," he said.

"Then [Fidel] Ramos gave it a little push and [Joseph] Estrada gave it a little more, but this waned again in the present administration," he said.

Balisacan, a professor of economics at the University of the Philippines, said that countries comparable to the Philippines in size and resources—like Thailand—have adopted consistent population policies carried out over a long period of time.

In the 1970s when the number of Filipinos and Thais were growing at a yearly rate of 3.08 percent and 2.74 percent, respectively, Thailand turned to the Philippines to study an apparently successful approach to population management, he said.

Three decades later, Thailand had reduced its population growth rate to 1.11 percent, or less than half of the Philippines' growth rate.

Balisacan said though income inequality may be a significant factor in determining a country's long-term development, a high proportion of people younger than 15 years was a "deeper determinant" of prosperity.

Population experts talk of a three-phase "demographic transition" scenario.

Demographic transition

In Phase 1 is, young dependents outnumber adults and elderly.

Phase 2, which is reached two decades after the first, is characterized by productive adults comprising a large part of the population compared to children and the elderly.

Phase 3, which occurs "about a century" after the first, would describe a population where senior citizens comprise the majority.

"The Philippines is at Phase 1, and the fact that it takes a generation before we can reach the more desirable Phase 2 shows the urgency and the need for a clear population policy backed by strong government support," Balisacan said.

The study was a sequel of one that Mapa and Balisacan did in 2004, which explored the relation of population growth and poverty.

The PCPD decided to commission a second part to show local government units what a lower population growth rate would mean for them.

More people, more money

The internal revenue allotment (IRA), which makes up about 64 percent of LGU budget, is largely based on the number of people in a province. Hence, more people means more money from the national coffers going to the LGU.

Carlos Abad-Santos, an APPC researcher, said a lower proportion of dependents would free up tens of millions of pesos that LGUs would spend on education, health and other services for fewer people.

Another simulation showed that Camarines Norte, Camarines Sur and Davao Oriental—some of the provinces with the highest number of kids relative to grown-ups—would each have freed up between P84 million and P270 million if they had lower proportions.

"Population management has effects on both revenues and expenditures for LGUs, but the net effect is benefits in terms of more money for quality services," Abad-Santos said. *Ronel Domingo*

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Romulo flies to 5 countries

AMID SPECULATIONS HE IS A LEADING CANDIdate for new Philippine ambassador to the United States, Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo left yesterday on a three-week official trip to five countries to pursue the Philippines' policy of strengthening its ties with key allies.

Interestingly, Romulo's first stop is Washington D.C. to attend the commemoration of the centenary of Filipino migration to the United States.

Romulo and Lauro Baja, the Philippines' Permanent Representative to the United Nations, have been prominently mentioned as possible replacements for Ambassador Alberto del Rosario, who has resigned effective July 8.

"In Washington, I will reaffirm the deep historic and cultural bonds between the Philippines and the United States," Romulo said in a statement yesterday.

The centenary commemoration began yesterday and will run up to June 18.

From the US, Romulo will proceed to Baku, Azerbaijan, to attend the 33rd Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers on June 18-19 upon the invitation of the Azerbaijan foreign minister.

He will be in Geneva, Switzerland, on June 21-22 to attend the Human Rights Council's High Level Ministers Meeting.

Romulo will also join President Arroyo in her official visits to the Vatican, Italy and Spain from June 26 to 30.

"The President will renew the Philippines' special ties and continued support for the Pope, the spiritual leader of the Roman Catholic faithful throughout the world," Romulo said.

In Italy, Ms Arroyo will meet with newly elected Italian President Giorgio Napolitano from whom she is expected to seek support for the Philippines' Debt-for-Millennium Development Goals initiative, the DFA said in a statement.

In Spain, she will meet with King Juan Carlos I and President Jose Luis Zapatero.

The President was also supposed to fly to Libya but the visit has been postponed indefinitely. *Nikko Dizon*

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Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF AGRARIAN REFORM
Provincial Agrarian Reform Office
San Francisco, Agusan del Sur

NOTICE OF COVERAGE AND FIELD INVESTIGATION

Pursuant to Section 7 of Republic Act No. 6657, the following landowners are hereby notified that their properties hereunder listed, to wit:

	LANDOWNER	LOCATION	TITLE NO.	LOT NO.	AREA	DATE OF OCULAR INSPECTION
1	Mauricia Martino (NAIDCOR)	Sta. Maria, Prosperidad	P-8648	142,GSS-1000	8.7575	07/17-21/06
2.	Jose Fiedacan (NAIDCOR)	Sta. Maria, Prosperidad	P-9394	146,GSS-1000	6.1585	07/17-21/06
3.	Jose Fiedacan (NAIDCOR)	Sta. Maria, Prosperidad	UT	163,GSS-1000	6.2784	07/17-21/06
4.	Amador Urbiztondo (NAIDCOR)	Sta. Maria, Prosperidad	P-7873	148,GSS-1000	7.8738	07/17-21/06
5.	Anatalio Lima (NAIDCOR)	Sta. Maria, Prosperidad	P-9216	137,GSS-1000	10.0000	07/17-21/06
6	Porfirio Jumuad (NAIDCOR)	Sta. Maria, Prosperidad	P-9444	32,GSS-1000	5.4200	07/17-21/06
7.	Perla Quilla (NAIDCOR)	Sta. Maria, Prosperidad	P-7590	164,GSS-1000	10.3154	07/17-21/06
8.	Eusebio Alvarez (NAIDCOR)	Sta. Maria, Prosperidad	P-7622	174,GSS-1000	6.9693	07/17-21/06
9.	Dominador Fernandez (NAIDCOR)	Sta. Maria, Prosperidad	P-7560	17,GSS-1003	7.5867	07/17-21/06
10.	Martiniano Soriano (NAIDCOR)	San Salvador, Prosperidad	(P-7867) P-5675	792,Pls-43	10.0036	07/17-21/06
11.	Leopoldo Bustaliño (NAIDCOR)	San Salvador, Prosperidad	(P-6070) P-4346	693,Pls-43	5.4140	07/17-21/06
12.	Auronta Agullion (NAIDCOR)	San Salvador, Prosperidad	T-2366	2943,Pls-43	7.2197	07/17-21/06
13.	Eleonor Saniel (NAIDCOR)	Sta. Maria, Prosperidad	UT	136,GSS-1000	6.9219	07/17-21/06
14.	Teodoro Vendiola (NAIDCOR)	Sta. Maria, Prosperidad	UT	152,GSS-1000	7.8995	07/17-21/06
15.	Crescencio Jamboy (NAIDCOR)	Sta. Maria, Prosperidad	UT	2,GSS-1004	10.6826	07/17-21/06
16.	Eusebio Alvarez (NAIDCOR)	Sta. Maria, Prosperidad	P-7619	26,GSS-1000	3.6924	07/17-21/06
17	Fulgencio Casas	Mahayahay, Sibagat	(T-226) 160	21,Pls-223	9.4106	07/24/06
	TOTAL				130.4239	

are now covered under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program under DAR Administrative Order No. 4, Series of 2005, the right to choose the area to be retained must be exercised within thirty (30) days from the date of Publication of the Notice of Coverage. Failure to exercise this right of retention within the prescribed period shall be considered as a waiver of the right/privilege to apply for exemption/exclusion or retention, nominate children as beneficiaries or submit evidence determining just compensation.

Under Executive Order No. 405, we shall request the Land Bank of the Philippines to determine the reasonable Land Value of the said properties being acquired pursuant to Section 17, of Republic Act 6657

June 7, 2006.

(Sgd.) MARINO M. GAYRAMON
Provincial Agrarian Reform Officer II

(PDI-June 15, 2006)

Supreme Court of the Philippines
Judicial and Bar Council
Manila

A. Pursuant to Section 1, Rule 7 of the Rules of the Judicial and Bar Council (JBC-009), as amended, the public is hereby invited to the Panel Interview of the following applications for the position of OVERALL DEPUTY OMBUDSMAN, at the Division Session Hall Ground Flr., New Supreme Court Bldg.:

Friday, June 16, 2006, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon
1. APOSTOL, PELAGIO S.
2. CASIMIRO, ORLANDO C.
3. ESPAÑOL, JOSE M. JR.
4. GAERLAN, SAMUEL H.
5. GONZALEZ, EMILIO III A.

Friday, June 16, 2006, 2:00-5:00 p.m.
1. KALLOS, ROBERT E.
2. LANTORIA, GERARDO JR. B.
3. MARCOS, LUZ Q.
4. SIAYNGCO, MANUEL D.J.
5. TANGUANCO, EDUARDO I.

Any information, written report, sworn complaint or opposition against any of the aforesaid candidates must be submitted on or before June 19, 2006.

B. The JBC also announces the opening of the position of **DEPUTY OMBUDSMAN FOR MINDANAO**, which will be vacated by Hon. Antonio E. Valenzuela on July 02, 2006.

Applicants/recommendees must (1) be a natural-born citizen of the Philippines; (2) be at least 40 years old at the time of his appointment; (3) be of recognized probity and independence; (4) be a member of the Philippine Bar; (5) not have been a candidate for any elective office in the immediately preceding election and (6) have been for ten years or more a judge or engaged in the practice of law in the Philippines.

Applications/recommendations must be submitted **NOT LATER THAN June 30, 2006.**

C. The JBC is now accepting applications for judicial positions in the following courts:

NCR
MANILA
RTC Br. 42
RTC Br. 40
MAKATI CITY
RTC Br. 61
RTC Br. 65
RTC Br. 138
METC Br. 64
MANDALUYONG CITY
RTC Br. 209
QUEZON CITY
RTC Br. 80
RTC Br. 85
METC Br. 42
PASIG CITY
RTC Br. 70
RTC Br. 167
CALOOCAN CITY
METC Br. 49
METC Br. 50
METC Br. 51
METC Br. 52
SAN JUAN
METC Br. 58

REGION I
LA UNION
RTC Br. 32
ILOCOS NORTE
MCTC Sarrat-Vintar

REGION II
CAGAYAN
MTCC Br. 2, Tuguegarao City
MCTC Sanchez Mira-Pamplona
ISABELA
MTC Echague

REGION III
NUEVA ECIJA
RTC Br. 39, San Jose City
RTC Br. 87, Gapan
RTC Br. 86, Cabanatuan City
RTC Br. 32, Guimba
MTCC Br. 2, San Jose City
MTC Talavera
MTC Sto. Domingo
ZAMBALES
RTC Br. 75, Olongapo City
MTCC Br. 3, Olongapo City
PAMPANGA
MTCC Br 1, San Fernando City
BULACAN
MTC Baliuag
MTC Sta. Maria

REGION IV
BATANGAS
RTC Br. 4, Batangas City
RTC Br 2, Batangas City
LAGUNA
RTC Br. 29, San Pablo City
RTC Br 32, San Pablo City
PALAWAN
RTC Br. 49, Puerto Princesa City
RIZAL
RTC Br. 75, San Mateo
CAVITE
MTC Noveleta

REGION V
CAMARINES SUR
RTC Br. 30, San Jose
RTC Br. 64, Labo
RTC Br. 34, Iriga City
RTC Br. 22, Naga City

REGION VI
NEGROS OCCIDENTAL
RTC Br. 57, San Carlos City
RTC Br. 58, San Carlos City
MTCC Br. 7, Bacolod City
AKLAN
MTC Kalibo
CAPIZ
MCTC Dao-Ivisan

REGION VII
CEBU
RTC Br. 5, Cebu City
MCTC Borbon, Tabogon

REGION VIII
SAMAR
MCTC GANDARA

REGION IX
ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE
RTC Br. 7, Dipolog City
ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR
MTCC Br. 2, Zamboanga City

REGION X
AGUSAN DEL SUR
RTC Br 7, Bayugan
MISAMIS ORIENTAL
MTC Magsaysay

REGION XI
MTCC Br 2, Island Garden City of Samal
SURIGAO DEL SUR
MTC Tandag

Applications for these courts must be submitted **NOT LATER THAN August 14, 2006**. Applicants must submit to the JBC Secretariat, 2nd Flr. Centennial Bldg., Supreme Court, Padre Faura St., Manila (Tel. No. 552-9512; Fax No 552-9598), the following:

Application Letter/Recommendation Letter with conforme of the recommendee	6 copies
Personal Data Sheet (JBC Form I down-loadable from the JBC Website (http://jbc.supremecourt.gov.ph)	6 copies
Picture (2x2)	4 copies
Certificate of Good Standing or latest Official Receipt from the IBP National Treasurer	6 copies
ITR for 2 preceding years	6 copies
NBI Clearance	6 copies
Transcript of Records	6 copies
Police Clearance from place o residence	6 copies

14 June 2006

(Sgd.) MA. LUISA D. VILLARAMA
Clerk of Court & JBC Ex Officio Secretary

More rains coming

THE RAINS ARE coming this week as surely as schools have opened.

The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration yesterday officially announced the onset of the wet season with the building up of the southwest monsoon trough north of the Philippines.

"We ask the public to brace for the rainy season. It signals the start of the entry of tropical cyclones," said Pagasa's weather branch chief Nathaniel Cruz.

Two to three tropical cyclones are expected this month. Up to 20 tropical cyclones enter the Philippine area of responsibility every year.

Pagasa said it had monitored elongated cloud clusters in the southwest-northeast part of the country the past 48 hours, along with the occurrence of heavy rains in the western part.

"These developments indicate the onset of the southwest monsoon/rainy season on the second week of June," Pagasa said in its bulletin yesterday.

"It's slightly delayed because of persistent ridges of high pressure in Asia and the North Pacific," Cruz said. The rainy season usually officially begins in late May. *Blanche S. Rivera*

Enough already, says Bongbong

By Cristina Arzadon
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

LAOAG CITY—ILOCOS Norte Gov. Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. is proposing a universal settlement of all the cases against his family as a talking point in the ongoing negotiations with the government.

Marcos said his family had long wanted to bring closure to the cases filed against them and was willing to enter into a compromise with the Presidential Commission on Good Government.

Buying peace

"[The negotiations] will include a universal settlement of all the cases (meaning a total settlement). All the cases must be finished," said the governor during a press briefing here on Wednesday.

"You are buying peace. That's what the family is interested in," he said.

PCGG Commissioner Ricardo Abcede has said he is in talks with former First Lady Imelda Marcos on a deal that would resolve the long-running cases against the family.

Full disclosure

Governor Marcos, however, thumbed down the proposal of Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. that the Marcoses make a full disclosure of all the assets in their possession before the government would start negotiations with the family.

"[If they insist on full disclosure] then they are not serious. They will make that as an excuse again—that we are not laying down everything [on the table]," Marcos said.

Asked if he believed the cases would be settled under the Arroyo administration, Marcos said: "It depends. This has been the sticking point... disclosure. If they are going to take that position, we will be going to end up in the same place, no settlement."

Marcos said the family had nothing more to disclose as all the assets and accounts they knew about were already in the hands of the PCGG.

Keep dollars

"We don't know of anything else. Some of the things that the PCGG talks about we don't even know and we're saying there's nothing like that," he said.

Marcos said the government could keep all the supposed accounts holding billions of dollars, including gold believed stashed abroad.

Greed

"But there is always this element of greed... If there are tons of gold in Switzerland, it's yours. But finish these [cases] already," he said.

He said he, his siblings Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos and Irene Marcos-Araneta and their mother had not sat down to discuss the issue formally.

He said they were leaving the discussions with the government up to their mother.

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TOTAL NO. OF SECURITY GUARDS		Nineteen (19)

Approved Budget : Php 3,029,985.00

Eligibility and Bid documents shall be available for insurance at the Administrative Division of PRO-IVA Main Office from June 8-30, 2006, Monday to Friday, 8.00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., upon payment of non-refundable fee of **Three Thousand Pesos** (Php 3,000.00).

The PRO-BAC shall determine the eligibility of prospective bidder by examining the completeness and appropriateness of their submitted eligibility documents/statements against the checklist of requirements, using the non-discretionary pass/fail criteria.

Pre-bid conference is scheduled on June 23, 2006 at 9.00 A.M. while deadline of submission and opening of duly accomplished Eligibility and Bid Documents will be on July 06, 2006, 10:00 A.M. and 10:15 A.M. respectively, both to be held at the Conference Room of PRO IV-A Main Office. The official time clock shall be the wall clock at the Conference Room entrance. Any bidder who comes late will not be entertained.

PRO IV-A BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to abort the bidding process, waive any minor defect/s or informality in the bids received, and to accept the most advantageous bid. Its decision shall be final and binding.

(Sgd.) MIGUEL T. MACALINAO
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - June 8 & 15 2006)

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Senate finds massive cheating in 2004 election

From page A1

He said the testimonies of witnesses and an examination of election documents showed that the cheating was concentrated in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. Some officials of the Commission on Elections and the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections also testified in the committee hearings.

In a privilege speech on Dec. 8, 2005, Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said Ms Arroyo made as many as 15 calls to Garcillano between May 26 and June 10, 2004. As a result of those calls, he said, Ms Arroyo gained a "fabricated margin of 1,063,777 votes" against Poe.

The committee began its hearings on Sept. 28, 2005. It was unable to complete its inquiry after Ms Arroyo issued Executive Order No. 464 forbidding government and military officials from testifying at congressional hearings.

The Supreme Court has declared the gag order unconstitutional, but state lawyers have filed a motion for reconsideration. In the meantime, Malacañang has held its ground, maintaining that the hearings were meant to subvert the Arroyo administration.

Once the Supreme Court issues a final decision on the motion, he would reconvene the committee to complete the hearings, Biazon said.

The former Armed Forces chief of staff said he had wanted to issue an interim report but he said it would be "unfair" to do so until all witnesses and persons implicated in controversy had testified.

But Biazon stated: "My initial evaluation of the testimonies and evidence points to massive cheating."

Asked if the extent of the alleged cheating would be enough to change the poll results, he said: "We are not trying to prove here who won the elections ... definitely the cheating benefited GMA."

Disclosure of the "Hello Garci" wiretaps in June 2005 provoked the worst political crisis of the 5-year-old Arroyo presidency.

The wiretaps

The audio recordings purportedly between Ms Arroyo and former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano allegedly showed she had manipulated the 2004 balloting. Ms Arroyo won by 1 million votes over her nearest rival, the late movie star Fernando Poe Jr.

The 59-year-old President has vehemently denied any wrongdoing. Last year, allies in the House of Representatives killed an opposition attempt to impeach Ms Arroyo on a technicality. The House minority has announced it will renew its attempt to unseat Ms Arroyo when Congress resumes its session next month.

In his appearance before a similar inquiry conducted by the lower house last year, Garcillano skated around questions on whether it was his voice that had been caught in the wiretap, but he acknowledged talking to Ms Arroyo on the phone in May 2004 just after the balloting.

The House committees that conducted joint hearings have issued an inconclusive final report. Without closure to the wiretapping controversy, Ms Arroyo continues to grapple with a crisis of legitimacy and restiveness in the military.

Hearings not closed

"I have not closed the Garci hearings. I want to wait for the final resolution of EO 464 because I do not want to push this into an institutional confrontation," Biazon said.

He said those still to be invited included Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye, National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales, officials of the National Bureau of Investigation, the AFP top brass, T/Sgt. Vidal Doble and the entire MIG-21 (Military Intelligence Group-21) of the Isafp.

Marietta Santos, Doble's former girlfriend, had testified before the Biazon committee that Doble had told her he and 13 other Isafp personnel had conducted the wiretapping.

The 25-year-old Santos also said she had access to Isafp, one of the nation's most restricted areas, when she had an affair with the soldier.

Bunye opened a Pandora's box in June 2005 when he presented two CDs of the supposed "Hello Garci" wiretaps to Malacañang reporters, claiming they were part of an opposition attempt to oust Ms Arroyo.

Biazon said Gonzales was to be summoned because he admitted in another Senate committee hearing that Ms Arroyo had indeed been wiretapped.

AFP inquiry clears own

An internal AFP investigation cleared Army chief Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, Southern Command chief Maj. Gen. Gabriel Habacon, retired Lt. Gen. Roy Kyamko and retired Brig. Gen. Francisco Gudani in connection with the election fraud charges. Their names cropped up in the alleged wiretaps of President Arroyo and Garcillano.

However, the AFP report—the Mayuga report—on these generals has been withheld.

The AFP's refusal to release the report to the Senate has resulted in the failure of Esperon to secure his promotion to the next rank during the last session of the Commission on Appointments before Congress adjourned on June 8. Esperon is said to be next in line to become AFP chief of staff.

Gudani, together with Lt. Col. Alexander Balutan, defied EO 464 and testified in the Senate hearing, delivering one of its most sensational testimonies.

On Sept. 28, 2005, Gudani said Ms Arroyo's husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo, flew twice to Mindanao in a private helicopter before the May 10, 2004, elections to deliver boxes containing P500 million.

He said the money was given to people who would deliver the votes for Ms Arroyo.

Senate hearings on Garci tapes

AUG. 10, 2005: CAPT. MARlon Mendoza testifies that as chief security officer of Virgilio Garcillano, he heard the former election commissioner tell other Comelec officials in Naga City that suspected "jueteng" lord Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda had given P300 million to support Ms Arroyo's victory in the 2004 election. On questioning, Mendoza admits he does not have personal knowledge if the money reached the President.

Sept. 28, 2005: Brig. Gen. Francisco Gudani testifies that an informant said First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo had flown twice to Iligan City in a private helicopter days before the election to deliver two boxes containing P500 million.

Gudani says he was yanked out as Marine commander in Lanao when he started asking Rey Sumalipao, Lanao del Sur poll supervisor, about a sudden move to change the assignments of Board of Elections Inspectors days before the polls.

Col. Alexander Balutan, a former commander under Gudani, testifies that Gudani's replacement, a certain Colonel Primo, issued an order to support the administration in the election.

For ignoring Executive Order No. 464, Gudani and Balutan are sacked.

Dec. 8, 2005: Marietta Santos testifies that as a girlfriend of Isafp agent Vidal Doble, she had access to an Isafp building in Camp Aguinaldo. She says Doble told her he and 13 other Isafp members had wiretapped the President upon orders of superiors. She identifies some of them as Lt. Col. Pedro Sumayo Jr., head of Isafp's Military Intelligence Group (MIG 21); Capt. Windell Rebong; Capt. Rex Sagge; a certain Captain 214; Master Sergeants Velledo and Callos, and Technical Sergeants Abanto and Cando.

Santos confirms former NBI official Samuel Ong's claims that Doble gave him the wiretaps.

Ashmare Lucman, president of the Lanao Unity Movement for GMA, testifies the President brought P2 million to Cagayan de Oro City to buy the silence of supporters who had ensured her victory in Lanao del Sur. He says Judge Nagamura Moner, former LUM president, received the money. Moner denies this.

Lucman says 13 months earlier, the First Gentleman and Manila airport chief Alfonso Cusi sent P1 million to the LUM to bribe election officers into overturning Fernando Poe Jr.'s lead over Ms Arroyo. Cusi denies this.

Jan. 19, 2006: Two tapes, dubbed children of the Garci tapes, that are played in the Senate reveal the wiretapping of opposition personalities from January to June 2004. Some of the voices recorded were those of retired Navy Commodore Rex Robles, former Sen. Gregorio Honasan's secretary Mira Dumlao, Sen. Panfilo Lacson's supporter retired Maj. Gen. Rodolfo Canieso, and Michaelangelo Zuce.

Marietta Santos names the annotators as Isafp agents T/Sgt. Ed Cando, Kuya Ben, Master Sergeant Belledo, T/Sgt. Allan Bisulo, Sagi, Rebong, 214, 215 and her boyfriend Doble.

Santos testifies that she saw a mobile phone interceptor, reportedly worth $420,000, during one of her forays into the "Blue Room" of the MIG 21 compound.

Feb. 10, 2006: The Senate committee on national defense cancels its inquiry into the tape scandal because witnesses like Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga, Brig. Gen. Marlou Quevedo, and Rear Adm. Tirso Danga are hindered from attending by EO 464.

March 14, 2006: Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, chair of the Senate committee on national defense, says he is open to expanding his committee's inquiry into the "Hello Garci" tape scandal to include the alleged switching of election materials at the House of Representatives in early 2005.

April 3, 2006: Comelec Commissioner Resurreccion Borra testifies that the 2004 election was "marred by irregularities" but that he "did not think these were done on a massive scale" and that it was "not done by one party or candidate alone." *PDI Research*

Phivolcs lists ...

From page A1

by movement in the Valley Fault System (VFS), also known as the Marikina Fault. The fault, which runs through the entire metropolis, has been found to be the "biggest threat to Metro Manila."

Quoting data from the Metro Manila Earthquake Impact Reduction Study (MMEIRS), Phivolcs chief Renato Solidum yesterday said at a forum in Makati that 38 percent or 494,000 of Metro Manila's 1.3 million homes could suffer slight or severe damage in a worst-case scenario.

"It does not matter how near or far you are from the fault, but how strong your buildings are," Solidum said, addressing representatives of the corporate sector.

Solidum gave the briefing more than two weeks after a 6.2-magnitude earthquake hit Yogyakarta in Java, Indonesia, killing 5,782 people.

Like Indonesia, the Philippines is in the Ring of Fire, an arc of volcanoes and fault lines encircling the Pacific Basin, making the country prone to earthquakes. About five quakes hit the Philippines every day but few are felt.

Of the 981 10- to 30-story buildings in Metro Manila, 38 percent or 372 are exposed to the same risk, while 14 percent or 16 of the 119 30- to 50-story buildings would be damaged, according to Solidum.

Deaths by fire

Some 33,500 people could be killed because of the quake while another 18,000 could die from fires resulting from the ground movement, he said.

Based on available geologic and seismic data, a 7.2-magnitude earthquake is the largest credible earthquake that can be generated by a movement of the Marikina Fault.

An earthquake of such strength could produce ground shaking of up to intensity 8 or 9 in the metropolis.

Evacuation tips

While he dished out earthquake preparedness and evacuation tips in office buildings, Solidum stressed the need to make homeowners aware of the risk entailed when they build houses.

Many houses, according to him, are equally exposed to the same risk but few residents are adopting earthquake-resistant building techniques.

He said simple engineering guidelines followed strictly through the construction phase could save the day for Metro Manila residents during a strong earthquake.

"There may be new techniques in building earthquake-resistant houses that are also cost-efficient," Solidum said.

Old buildings are more susceptible to damage from the impact of a 6-magnitude quake but newer buildings could perhaps withstand a 7-magnitude temblor, he said.

The age of the structure and the materials they are made of are the main factors in determining a quake's impact, according to the Phivolcs chief.

Review building code

The agency has proposed a closer look into the construction of houses in Metro Manila when the Structural Code of the Philippines, which is up for review this year, is reexamined. The code is reviewed every four years.

"Our recommendation is to review the code. We would like to see stricter guidelines for residential buildings, otherwise we will not be able to solve the problem of residential buildings being susceptible to strong quakes," Solidum said.

The MMEIRS was a two-year study completed in late 2004. Phivolcs has presented the MMEIRS to various local governments since last year, but not all have acted on it. Muntinlupa, Makati, Marikina and Quezon cities have adopted earthquake preparedness plans.

"Some act immediately, others are slow. We can only assist them," he said.

The Task Force on Building Inspection of the Department of Public Works and Highways has already inspected 1,983 buildings in Metro Manila and found that at least 60 public buildings, most of them schools, could sustain "life threatening" damage in the event of a strong earthquake.

Phivolcs considers a 6-magnitude temblor strong; 7-magnitude, major; 5-magnitude moderate; and 4-magnitude feeble.

Police rule out terrorists, Reds in Metro blasts

From page A1

arsenal of armed units. These units include the police and the military, the CPP and its armed wing, the New People's Army, and groups with links to any of these forces.

TNT is also a favorite weapon of the Abu Sayyaf.

3, not 4, blasts

The PNP spokesperson, Senior Supt. Samuel Pagdilao, said there had been only three, and not four, explosions in Metro Manila since June 1—at the Grepalife building in Makati City on June 6, at Philcoa, Quezon City, on June 11, and at Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig City on June 13.

"We did not include in the list the Manila incident because we did not find any trace of bomb materials in the area," Pagdilao said, referring to the reported explosion near a police precinct in Liwasang Bonifacio also on June 11.

But he pointed out that other bombing attacks occurred in Central and Southern Luzon within the same period, involving the Hummer H2 SUV of Batangas Gov. Armand Sanchez, the mansion of suspected "jueteng" lord Rodolfo "Bong" Pineda, and the public market in Lipa City.

But Ele said police tended to view the grenade attack in Lipa that wounded eight people and the attempt on the life of Sanchez that killed two people as unrelated to the explosions in Metro Manila.

"The bombings [in Batangas] were really intended to kill or injure," he said.

'Mosquito attacks'

A ranking police intelligence officer told the INQUIRER that "people with AFP (Armed Forces of the Philippines) or PNP background" were the likely suspects in the Metro Manila attacks.

"They are the only ones making these bombs," said the officer, who requested anonymity because he had no clearance from his superiors to speak with reporters.

The officer offered an analysis of the bombing incidents—which he called "mosquito attacks"—in Quezon City and Camp Bagong Diwa:

- These were not terrorist bombings, which usually target crowded places and use powerful explosives to inflict maximum damage.
- The attackers were careful not to harm anyone, based on the timing and power of the explosions.
- The attackers apparently wanted to portray the bombings as aimed at unpopular targets.

"There is an effort at mass appeal by whoever is behind this," the officer said, adding:

"Grepalife has problems with pre-need plan holders, and Pineda has been alleged to be a jueteng lord."

Pattern

Ele aired similar comments.

"We are establishing a pattern here," he told reporters. "The explosions were not really intended to kill or to injure. They [were put in place] in the wee hours and set off early in the morning, when there were few people [around]."

He added: "Certainly, this is an act of terror designed to create fear among the population. [But] we are discounting the possibility that established terror groups like the Jemaah Islamiya, Abu Sayyaf, and even ... the extreme Left are involved."

Besides destabilization forces, police are looking into "dissatisfaction" in the uniformed services as a motive in the attacks, Ele said.

He said it was also possible that "misguided elements" were being "exploited and utilized by some interest groups [to advance] political motives."

The attacks, he added, might be meant to "destroy the morale of the police."

Palace confident

Malacañang sought to allay the fears of some militant groups that the government would declare another state of emergency in response to the bombing incidents.

"In our view, those fears have no basis," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye told reporters. "We are confident that the [PNP], in due time, will be able to unmask and bring to justice these agents of fear and terror."

Speaking over RMN radio, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said the explosions were "just meant to call attention" to the perpetrators' capability to wreak fear and confusion.

He assured the public that authorities were now investigating the matter.

But administration lawmakers assailed the AFP and PNP for their "clear failure" to stop the bombings in Metro Manila despite their being on red alert.

Rep. Benasing Macarambon (NPC, Lanao del Sur) and Monico Puentevella (Lakas, Bacolod City), vice chair and member, respectively, of the House defense committee, said PNP Director General Arturo Lomibao and PNP-National Capital Region Director Vidal Querol should apprehend the perpetrators lest the public believe allegations that the bombings were the government's handiwork.

"Authorities should maximize their intelligence operations to effectively pin down the real bombers and their backers," Puentevella said.

Scoffs at Gonzales

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon also pressed the PNP and other law enforcement agencies to quickly identify the perpetrators, if only to quell fears of a resurgence of political instability.

"There must be a thorough investigation to determine the identity of those responsible for the bombings. Without clarification, these can only contribute to the instability in the country," he said in an interview.

Biazon, chair of the Senate defense committee and a former AFP chief, also scoffed at the conclusion made by National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales that the political opposition had masterminded the rash of explosions.

"I don't accept that. Is everybody in the opposition being lumped together with destabilizers?" the senator said.

Biazon—who, along with Senate President Franklin Drilon and Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan, broke ties with Ms Arroyo last year—said Gonzales was not helping quell instability with such statements.

"He's adding to the instability," Biazon said. *With reports from Christine O. Avendaño, TJ Burgonio, Philip C. Tubeza and Norman Bordadora*

Puno notes suspicious similarities

INTERIOR SECRETARY RONALDO Puno saw a suspicious similarity between the explosion at Camp Bagong Diwa and the shooting of the Arroyo-owned LTA Building in Makati and the bomb attack on his van in December 2005.

"It's the same SOP and propaganda. If you look at the method, [the bombers are] making it appear that they are the good guys because they are not hurting people," Puno said.

"But in effect, they are still causing chaos. These are not good people," he said.

Puno said that as in the attack on the building owned by the family of the President's husband and on the van parked outside the Puno residence in Quezon City, opponents of the administration would say that it was losing control.

"Afterward, [the bombers] would say that the police themselves were the ones behind the attack [inside Camp Bagong Diwa]," he said.

A group that called itself Enlightened Warriors claimed responsibility for the attack on the LTA building and the explosions under parked vehicles, such as Puno's van, in Metro Manila.

Puno said police had narrowed down the suspects in the recent bombings to the anti-Arroyo sectors.

"Definitely, it was not the NPA," he said.

Puno said those behind the explosions merely wanted to keep up the climate of uncertainty because the political situation had already stabilized.

"There is no real threat to the government anymore. They just want to keep the instability alive," he said.

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SC scolds Ombudsman: Act on Mega Pacific by June 30

From page A1

Office of the Ombudsman to determine by June 30—under pain of contempt—whether probable cause exists to charge Commission on Elections officials who approved the P1.3-billion Mega Pacific computerization deal.

The Supreme Court voided the deal two-and-half years ago on the grounds that the Comelec disregarded the law and its bidding procedures when it awarded the contract to automate the counting of ballots to Mega Pacific eSolutions Inc. *(See "In the Know" at right.)*

Denied with finality

The tribunal yesterday also denied with finality "for utter lack of merit" the Ombudsman's motion asking the high court to reconsider its May 3 resolution ordering the antigraft body to submit a report on the Mega Pacific deal by the end of the month.

In the motion for reconsideration filed early this month, Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez argued that the high tribunal's order had undermined its independence and denied it due process.

Claiming that it was "not a party to the case," the Ombudsman said it could not be "directed" to render a report on the "possible culpability of the parties."

"With the high court's directive, what will prevent lower courts from directing us?" Gutierrez asked.

Duty to investigate

But the Supreme Court reminded the Ombudsman that as "protector of the people," it was mandated to "act promptly on all complaints filed in any form or manner against any public officials or employees of the government."

"The complaints may be filed by any individual or citizen or group, or even an anonymous person. All the same, the (Ombudsman) cannot shirk from its duty to investigate and act promptly," the high court said, adding:

"Simply because the Supreme Court has no administrative control and supervision over the (Ombudsman) does not mean that the high court is no longer entitled to prompt action from the (Ombudsman)."

Last week, Gutierrez said her office had started investigating the Mega Pacific deal because "the Ombudsman acts on its own ... not because of the Supreme Court directive."

Undue delay

What the high court finds surprising is the fact that the Ombudsman "does not refute" the claim of the Information Technology Foundation of the Philippines, which filed the case against the Comelec on behalf of the losing bidders, "that it (antigraft court) had practically sat on their complaint for more than one year and four months already."

"It has not even attempted to justify its inertness for the unreasonable length of time, which obviously spells undue delay, contrary to its constitutional mandate to act promptly on complaints filed before it," the Supreme Court said.

Out of tune

On the Ombudsman's independence, the Supreme Court said its directive for the antigraft court to render a report on a regular basis "does not in any way impinge upon the (Ombudsman's) independence as provided under the Constitution."

"Nowhere in the questioned resolution did the court demand that the Ombudsman decide or make specific determination—one way or the other—of the culpability of any of the parties. Our directive was for the Ombudsman to report its 'final determination of whether a probable cause exists against any of the public officials (and conspiring private individuals, if any),'" the court said.

The tribunal said this reportorial requirement was not an interference in the Ombudsman's power to investigate and prosecute. "Its protestations of judicial interference is strange and totally out of tune."

The court also said the Office of the Ombudsman's claim that it was denied due process "utterly lacks merit."

In a visit to the INQUIRER last week, Gutierrez claimed her office had been denied due process when the court issued the order without giving it the chance to explain.

WHAT WENT BEFORE

A MONTH AFTER THE COMMISSION on Elections announced that the 2004 national elections would be automated, the Supreme Court voided the P1.3-billion Mega Pacific contract that would have made the plan possible.

In its decision, dated Jan. 13, 2004, the high court said the Comelec disregarded the law and its own bidding rules when it awarded the contract for the automation of the counting and canvassing of ballots to Mega Pacific eSolutions Inc.

'Inexplicable haste'

It found the company's counting machines vulnerable "to election fraud on a massive scale by means of just a few key strokes."

Voting 9-3-2, with three justices dissenting and two asking for more time, the Supreme Court said the Comelec awarded the contract with "inexplicable haste." It ordered the Office of the Ombudsman to determine the criminal liability of those involved in the case.

The Mega Pacific contract was approved on April 15, 2003 by Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Jr. and Commissioners Luzviminda Tancangco, Rufino Javier, Resurreccion Borra, Ralph Lantion, Mehol Sadain and Florentino Tuason Jr. Tancangco, Javier, Lantion and Sadain have retired.

In December last year, Borra said a collection case filed by Mega Pacific against the poll body was hindering the recovery of the P1.3 billion. The company is demanding payment of the P200-million balance for the purchase of the counting machines. The case is pending at a regional trial court.

Multimillion storage fees

The counting machines, numbering more than 1,000, are kept in a four-story warehouse in Manila. Storage fees and other materials amount to about P3.9 million a year.

The Mega Pacific contract is the second election modernization agreement that the Supreme Court voided. It earlier scrapped the P6-billion contract for voters' registration awarded to the Photokina Group in 2000. *PDI Research*

A first: 93-min movie ...

From page A1

completed a 93-minute documentary that they say is the first feature film to be entirely shot by such a technique.

Called "New Love Meetings," the documentary was filmed in a MPEG4 format with a Nokia N90—a regular, higher-end cell phone on sale around the globe, documentary codirector Marcello Mencarini said.

A fixture

The technique underscores what has become a fixture in today's globalized world—the use of amateur video and cell phone cameras to immortalize moments in people's lives.

When news breaks, early footage is often shot with a cell phone. And, in the case of major events, authorities and news outlets have been known to call on amateurs to come forward with video.

"With the widespread availability of cell phones equipped with cameras, anybody could do this," Mencarini said in a telephone interview from Milan.

"If you want to say something nowadays, thanks to the new media, you can," he added.

Limitations

When it comes to movies, though, cell phone cameras present limits, such as the difficulty to film in darkness or the lack of microphones. As a result, the movie mostly features close-ups, and the image, while clear overall, is slightly shaky.

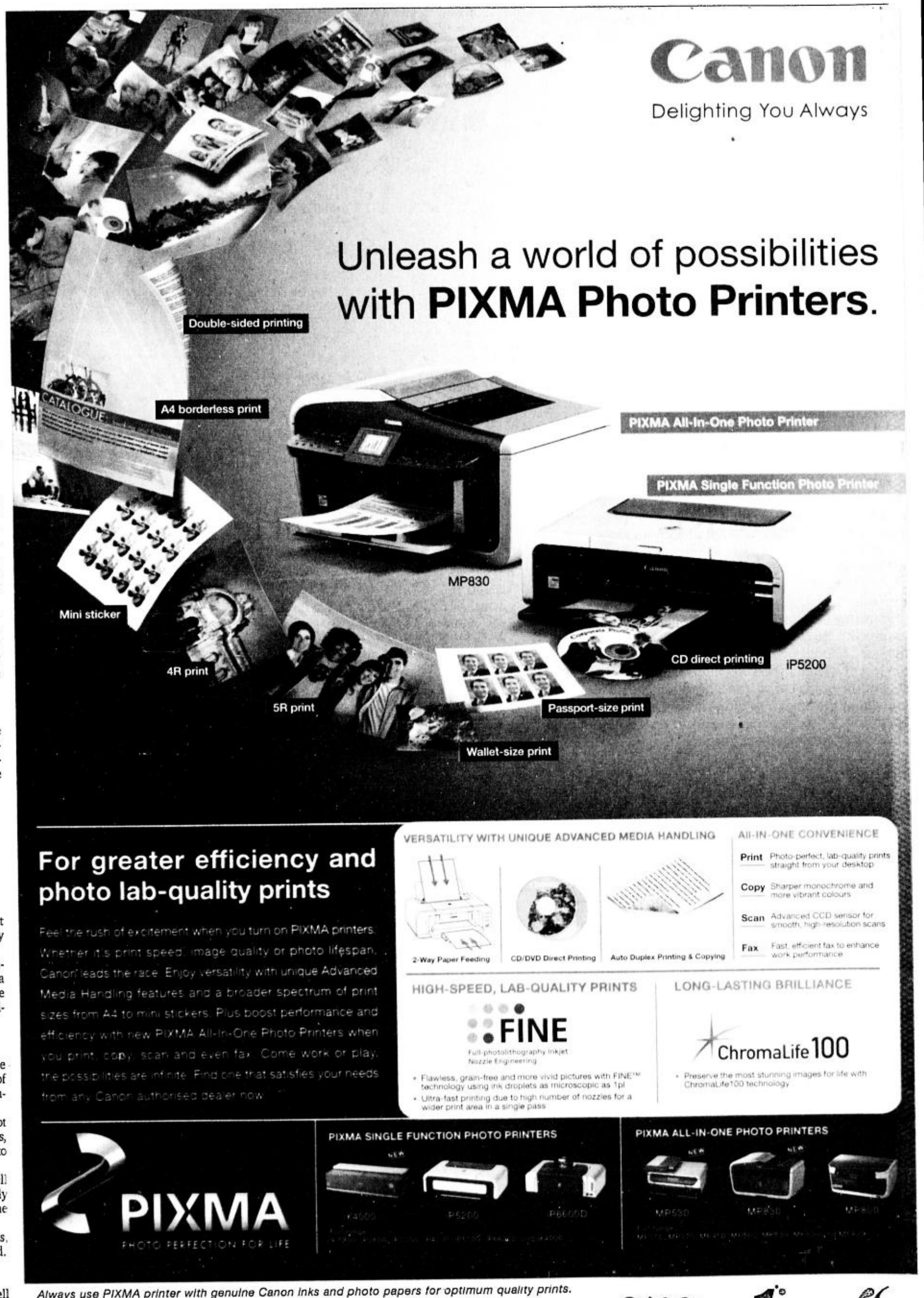
The Italian directors said that no post-production manipulation was made on the image.

Although no professional lighting was needed, a pocket flashlight was used at times, said Milan-based Barbara Seghezzi, the other director of the movie.

The approach offers the advantage of being intimate, leading people to open up.

Not much, however, has changed.

"When it comes to sexuality, a certain malaise is still there; taboos and problems persist," Seghezzi said. *AP*



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OPINION

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Not the usual suspects

EDITORIAL

DIRECTOR VIDAL QUEROL, CHIEF OF THE NATIONAL Capital Region Police Office, admits that the spate of bombings during the last few days is an embarrassment to him. "As Metro Manila police chief," he said, "I feel ashamed over what has been happening in the last few days."

He has every reason to feel that way, and that goes too for every member of the police organization, especially those assigned to the metropolitan area. A week after the first bomb exploded at the Grepalife building in Makati City on June 6, police investigators remain clueless about the identity of the bomber or bombers and their reasons for carrying it out. What they got instead were more bombs exploding—and right under their very noses.

On Sunday, an explosion rocked the police station at Liwasang Bonifacio in Manila. That very same morning, another blast ripped a bus being used by the PNP as mobile police station and jail, which was parked at the Elliptical Road in Quezon City. Then last Tuesday, another bomb exploded under a Special Weapons and Tactics van parked inside Camp Bagong Diwa, the headquarters of the NCRPO. "These criminals are taunting us, and doing a good job of it," Querol concluded.

That much seems clear, if the targets and the kind of explosives used are anything to go by. Apparently the bombers don't intend to kill or maim anyone; at the very least, they want to prick the egos and shatter the self-esteem of police officials and, maybe, the Arroyo administration. But if that is all they want, then the citizens have very little to worry about. Saving the pride and reputations of policemen and other public officials are the least of our people's problems.

But even this theory leaves unanswered the more important question: Why? Or to what purpose?

Some cynical observers have noted that just days before the first bombing, a military spokesperson was denying that martial law was about to be declared. There are no bombings or anarchy in the streets which would justify such a declaration, the spokesperson was quoted as saying. Now these observers are asking if the bombings are intended to provide a reason for clamping down emergency rule.

Far-fetched or even crazy? The country went through the same route before, with Ferdinand Marcos citing a mock assassination attempt on his defense secretary, Juan Ponce-Enrile, as one of the more immediate reasons for proclaiming martial law in September 1972. Originality does not come easy to political leaders, who feel their backs against the wall, or to their allies in the military or the police force.

Some intelligence officers, who spoke on condition of anonymity for obvious reasons, suspect that either military men or policemen themselves could have carried out the recent bombings. Policemen certainly had the clearest shot at the targets hit so far. One intelligence officer also noted that the bombings didn't have the earmarks of the operations of the Jemaah Islamiyah or the Abu Sayyaf, meaning that those groups don't fool around with bombs; they want to see blood and dead bodies when they have done their work, such as in the Valentine's Day bombing in Makati, the Superferry blast off Manila Bay or the Rizal Day bombing at an LRT.

Which is not the case with the recent bombings, as those who planted the explosives seemed to have made sure nobody got hurt, and especially not policemen. The intention apparently was merely to create "sound effects," as Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor said.

But again, why? Defensor says the bombing are being done by "destabilizers" who are out either to sow fear among civilians or to "show an image of destabilization."

That explanation doesn't sound good enough. Troublemakers who want to sow fear among civilians would select civilian targets and aim for maximum mayhem and damage. Why would Filipinos cower in fear when all they hear are "sound effects" coming from police camps and stations?

Because of the recent bombings, the Filipino people certainly have reason to be afraid. But this time, the real threats to national stability and their own peace of mind may not be coming from the usual suspects.

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Insights from abroad

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

FOR BREVITY, WE'VE EDITED TWO INSIGHTful Internet articles: "Musings on the Da Vinci Code" by a Malaysian Muslim lady; and "The Englishman's Wife" by a Filipino at the University of London.

Marina Mahathir, a daughter of former Malaysian prime minister Mahathir Mohamad, writes: A friend related how, after her daughter read the Da Vinci Code, she wanted to read the Bible. She was concerned that impressionable young minds couldn't differentiate fact from fiction.

Perhaps, Muslims need a Da Vinci Code-type book to spark off in their young the same interest in their own religion. Except that if one wrote a similar thriller, based around Islam, thousands would riot.

There were riots over Salman Rushdie's book: "The Satanic Verses." The president of Pakistan then, Benazir Bhutto, commented wryly that the people dying over the book were those who would never have read it, or even heard of it, if someone hadn't whipped them into a frenzy. A similar situation arose with the cartoons. As insensitive as they were, they were still not worth dying over.

Such is the difference between our religions. Upset Christians countered the book with seminars and other educational events. There have been no Da Vinci Code-related deaths. Which speaks volumes for adherents of the faith.

People's impressions of a religion are related to the behavior of its adherents. When people, in the name of religion, burn and kill, their act gives the impression of a religion that advocates this, no matter that nowhere, in its religious texts, does it say they should.

Unfortunately, we get (this) from the whole spectrum: men who publicly insult women daily without censure to the real crazies. In New York, I listened embarrassed to a Muslim man say to a non-Muslim woman at a forum: "Don't mess with Muslims. We have nuclear weapons!" In one fell swoop, this nutcase confirmed every stereotype of violence-prone Muslims.

The only people who can dispel stereotypes about Muslims are women. Even when conservative women speak out, they will change perceptions. Their presence and articulateness will be noticed because (this is) a world where Muslim women are perceived perpetually hidden behind curtains.

Thus far, few Muslim men, in international media, give a good impression in international media. We might argue that Western media select who they interview to perpetuate stereotypes. That's a problem for all. Anyone who looks like the archetypal wild-eyed conservative is more telegenic than someone who looks like everyone else.

We must make a concerted effort to come together as one community and decide on a sophisticated media strategy. If we manage, as a global community, to change other people's perceptions of us, our own people might think more kindly of each other, so peace would reign within. And because within ourselves, we respect diversity, we can do the same with others.

* * *

Ronald Rodriguez, a School of Oriental and African Studies student, writes: On a Brighton pier, I met an Englishman who thought I was Japanese. He was taken aback when I told him I was from the Philippines. As he apologized, I reassured him I took no offense. Filipino friends and I were mistaken for Chinese.

Why should I make an issue out of a random instance of mistaken identity, I said. The blood in my veins is 100-percent Filipino, notwithstanding my American first name, Ronald, and my Spanish last name, Rodriguez. Identity, I said, is important to know one's self before it becomes useful for others to know you.

He said he'd met Filipino men living in the United Kingdom, the Englishman said. Some would not look him in the eye when they said they were Filipinos. Sad but understandable.

Why is it understandable? I asked. After listening to his stories about Presidents Marcos, Estrada and Arroyo, I realized: Here was one of the few British people who knew a lot about the Philippines.

It's one thing to be ashamed of leaders, I countered, another to be ashamed of one's own country. Sometimes, a government reflects a people deceived or whose expectations have been failed by leaders they once trusted. At the very least, unworthy leaders reflect the people's mistake—one that could be corrected, if people choose to.

When I asked the Englishman how he knew so much about the Philippines, he waved his hand—and a woman afar responded. As she walked closer, I asked: Were we looking at a Filipina? He replied: "Yes, my wife is Filipina."

There was only one question in my mind: Is she one of those ashamed of their own country? After a long conversation, I asked the Englishman's wife: What is the Philippines worth to you? Without batting an eyelash, she replied: "Nothing."

Had she asked what the Philippines was worth to me, I'd have said: "Everything." For what is a Filipino who lives and dies without trying to make his people a better nation?

How many Filipinos like her exist today? Very few, maybe. And probably, it's not difficult to win them back. More difficult is making sure that no more Filipinos become like the Englishman's wife.

Before I left, the Englishman shook my hand and whispered: "As long as you Filipinos believe in yourselves, there'd no reason why we non-Filipinos should not believe in you."

Lobotomized nation

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I REMEMBER AGAIN SOMETHING OLIVER Sachs wrote. Sachs is the famous neurologist whose writings have inspired a number of movies, including "Awakenings," "At First Sight," and "The Man Who Mistook His Wife For a Hat." His case that I remember reading about had to do with an ex-hippie who could not remember anything after a few minutes. He was living completely in the present, having no memory of things that had just happened to him.

The man was diagnosed to have suffered a trauma in his frontal lobe—possibly the result of psychotropic drugs—and was exhibiting the same symptoms as patients who had undergone lobotomy, or the removal of the frontal lobe of the brain. In the past, lobotomy had been prescribed for excessively violent criminals, which succeeded in pacifying them. But only at the equally criminal price of robbing them of their memories. The reason they became pacific was because of that—they had no past, they had no future. They had nothing to bother them, they had nothing to look forward to.

I did say in a couple of columns in the past that I thought we were a lobotomized nation, a nation that lived pretty much in the present. It's as if we too had the frontal lobes of our brain removed, rendering us unable to remember even more recent events. We have no past and no future. We merely drift by in the present.

Last Monday offered fresh evidence of it. Interviewed by reporters after the flag-waving ceremonies in Kawit, Cavite, several kids who participated in the pageantry of Independence Day were at a loss to answer questions the reporters posed to them. One knew what the symbols in the flag represented but did not quite know what the importance of Kawit, Cavite was. Another knew June 12 marked the day when the Philippines declared its independence from Spain but did not know when that happened. Still another said they were just required to be part of the celebrations.

The mayor who appeared quite embarrassed lamented that, true enough, many Caviteños were not greatly aware of the history of Cavite.

But God in heaven, this wasn't just the history of Cavite, this was the history of the Philippines. I myself wasn't entirely surprised by it. Many Filipinos can't even remember the two Edsas anymore. The martial law babies can't remember martial law, or want to know about it. And heaven knows if we still remember the War.

I suspect that even if the reporters had posed their questions to our public officials, elected and non-elected, including the non-elected holding elective office, many of them might not have been able to answer. If we have declared independence at all, it would seem to be only from our past.

Of course, like morality or the sense of right and wrong, history or the sense of continuity is bound to be dismissed in these cynical times, particularly by a cynical government, as of little practical importance to the nation. "You can't eat sovereignty," as the people who demanded the retention of the US bases said then. They eventually ate their words.

The consequences of being a lobotomized nation are pretty much the same as the consequences of being a lobotomized individual. You have no past, you have no future. You have nothing to bother you, you have nothing to look forward to. "Let's move on" is today's equivalent of "You can't eat sovereignty." What it really means is, let's drift aimlessly.

I've repeatedly written about the importance of emphasizing History in classrooms. Its practical value is immediate and immense. The reason we have a poor sense of country is that we have a poor sense of history, if we have one at all. We have no sense of belonging, we have no sense of rooted-ness, we have no sense of home.

It's not true that we are no better or worse than other Asian countries which also have a great number of their people leaving for other shores. Quite apart from the sheer difference in scale, there is the difference in attitude. Other people leave the land of their birth as a last resort, we do so as a first resort. Where is the sense in raising the quality of local education—even if that were possible in these corrupt and inflationary times—if you will only produce graduates who metamorphose into caregivers and hop on to the next plane to Canada?

But history has an even more immense practical value, even it isn't as immediate and patent as the one above—that is, you have no past, you have no present. You won't be able to make sense of the present, having no signposts or landmarks to recognize the surroundings and know where you are—which is often just back where you started.

June 12, 1898 isn't unlike where we are now, for those with the eyes to see it, or the frontal lobe to remember it. It was the hiatus between Spanish colonial rule and the American one, between an old and moribund tyrannical rule and a new and resurgent one. A couple of months later, Intramuros would fall, but the Spanish would surrender not to the Philippine insurrectionary forces but to the nascent American occupational forces led by Admiral Dewey. By February the following year, the Filipinos would be waging another revolution, against what would prove to be a worse, if subtler, tyranny.

Not unlike what we've just gone through in the last five years or so, toppling an old and decaying tyranny only to fall under a new and far more vicious one.

Talk of the importance of history and most everyone will quote George Santayana's famous aphorism—that those who do not read their history are bound to repeat it. That is not a blithe platitude, that is a shrill warning. Repeating history isn't just bad karma, which will condemn us to endless reincarnations as insects.

Repeating history is, well, having Marcos and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo for life.

Political stability urgent for economic progress

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE BIG FUND MANAGEMENT FIRM MERILL Lynch is only the latest to come out in favor of Charter change. It reaffirmed its "overweight" buy recommendation on the Philippines on the strength of a political analysis that gives Cha-cha a 50-percent probability of success, and a second impeachment move against President Macapagal-Arroyo very much reduced chances of success. Its UK-based strategist, Benoit Anne, said, "The move to a parliamentary system would contribute to the streamlining of the decision-making process, as it would lead to a merger of both houses." She also reiterated what many of us have been saying: a unicameral legislature would be "cost-effective." The investment firm stressed the obvious correlation between political stability and economic reforms—one without the other would not work. This point of view is popular among hard-nosed businessmen and finance companies. Unfortunately, it's not shared by the senators who think economic reforms are enough, and that the political status quo should be maintained.

* * *

Recently, I attended a briefing conducted jointly by Citicorp Financial Services & Insurance Brokerage Phils. Inc. and ING Bank N.V. (Philippine branch). What struck me was how political developments perceived to be negative have affected economic gains. The lecturers' graph was like a see-saw. For example, the Oakwood mutiny virtually erased all the gains of that period. When RP bonds' net asset value (NAV) was recovering slowly, the announcement of FPJ's candidacy sent it plunging. It was again recovering for a year, when the Garci tapes controversy and the Cabinet resignations stopped it in its tracks. After things stabilized, the Feb. 25 coup attempt brought it down again. Things have leveled off after the peaceful May 1 observance.

One thing the briefing made clear is that RP's economic fundamentals are pretty much intact. Factors such as the 6.9 percent inflation rate of May 2006, the 5-percent GDP growth and the moderate increase in transport costs are getting better despite rising oil prices, and no foreseeable factors are threatening to upset the market. Citicorp opined that the risk on RP bonds has been significantly reduced, and that we're much better off now than in November 2001. But it said certain developments still bear watching, such as the second impeachment complaint and the transport hikes this July, and yes, the battle for Charter change.

* * *

Echoing these investment firms, Romela Bengzon of the Charter Change Advocacy Commission and head of its panel for economic amendments, said it would be a "big gamble" if constitutional changes embody only the economic provisions. This could only lead to a boom and bust cycle all over again, she said. She was obviously referring to the recent proposal by a Senate committee to limit amendments to the economic provisions. One only has to look at our history of short-lived and erratic economic policies under our presidential-bicameral set-up, where the Executive Branch has to engage in intense lobbying and debates with either or both chambers of Congress, before any economic bill can be passed. This system has hampered our economic takeoff so much, unlike that of our neighbors' parliamentary governments. If we have to push Charter change, amending the political system has to come first in order to lay the basis of economic stability.

* * *

Russia and RP mark the 30th anniversary of their diplomatic relations this month. The Cultural Center of the Philippines, the Friendship Society Philippines-Russia Inc. and the Embassy of the Russian Federation have joined hands to put up a "Russian Cultural Festival" starting yesterday to June 18. On this occasion, it is fitting to plug the two-volume book, "Personalizing Russia (even by those who know her little but love her much)," by Sr. Teresa Joseph Constantino, OCD, who was known to legions of UP students as the legendary Humanities Prof. Josefina D. Constantino. Now over 30 years a Carmelite sister at the Gilmore Convent, she wrote this book based on her two lectures and three conferences in Russia in the mid-1990s. It details in delightful fashion how God, as she saw it, paved the way for her most unusual trip as a religious. She was helped and prodded by the late and very Marian Jaime Cardinal Sin who made a very productive visit to Russia in 1987.

* * *

A "smorgasbord of a book," as she puts it, "Personalizing Russia" has something for all kinds of readers. As US-based Filipino Prof. Raul Lejano, a doctor in environmental engineering, the first permanent faculty at UCLA and former visiting professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, put it, "I read it like a spiritual scrapbook, in the best sense." Lejano found the nun's "evocation of the monastic tradition in Russia and the astounding notion that the hope of Russia might lie deep in the recesses of its monasteries where truth was kept alive like a firebrand in the midst of sweeping materialism." There's enough of the "heavy stuff" in the second volume, e.g., what caused the collapse of the Soviet Empire and brought the end of Communism. But what captivated Lejano are the little stories Constantino liberally sprinkled all over the book: "waiting at the train station, sitting in the train with two drunken men, finding yourself in front of the Bogo Mater, and others."

As for me, I liked her myriad *kwento* about Russia that show a seemingly impregnable faith from beginning to end: her meeting with Blessed Mother Teresa in St. Petersburg, her interaction with Orthodox nuns and leaders, and even just finding her way around Moscow. I bring these two volumes with me in the car and, when caught by traffic, I just pick up where I left off. Get your copy of these two volumes at only P600 at the Carmelite Monastery, 4 Gilmore St., Quezon City.

Fake drugs could kill

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

THE INQUIRER IS ONE OF THE INSTITUTIONS behind the current campaign against fake drugs. It is not every day that this paper joins a campaign. We're quite choosy, you see.

Counterfeit drugs could kill. This was the title of the first part of the three-part series I wrote some years ago. At that time, the Philippines landed on the list of proliferators of fake drugs. The list was released by the Drug Information Association that was meeting in Canada. Another concern at that time was adverse drug reaction (ADR). For while even genuine drugs could cause ADR, how much more the fake ones whose components only the fakers know about?

Listed as an ADR is "failure of efficacy" or Type F. This is what sends patients asking, "Why is the drug not working?" Therapeutic failure could be due to a drug that has little or nothing in it. In other words, some illegal manufacturers could have tampered with a brand's contents and unless the doctor and patient get the drug tested, they have no way of knowing the cause of the problem.

A change of prescription could be the next option, and if the new drug is not fake, it could work. That is, if it is not too late and the patient has not crossed the bridge of no return.

There has been a debate on whether or not brand names of drugs that have been counterfeited should be published so that the public may know. (I did provide a list.) Legit drug companies whose brands have been counterfeited could raise a howl and say they are getting a double whammy because sales of even the genuine items could suffer because consumers will stay away. That is the short-term adverse effect.

But there is a positive long-term effect. Exposing the counterfeit could put the evildoers' work on hold. The informed public would pay more attention to what they are buying. In the end, the genuine drug makers would profit from this kind of vigilance.

Fake drugs are not like fake signature jeans or watches that serve their purpose in much the same way as the original, and they're even cheaper. Fake drugs sell like the genuine ones but they have reduced efficacy or none at all. Worse, they endanger lives.

According to RA 8203 (The Special Law on Counterfeit Drugs), counterfeit medicines refer to 1) the drug itself, or the container or labeling thereof or any part of such drug, container, or labeling bearing, without authorization, the trademark, trade name or other identification mark, or imprint or any likeness to that which is owned or registered in the Bureau of Patent;

2) a drug product refilled in containers by unauthorized persons if the legitimate labels are used;

3) an unregistered imported drug product, except drugs bought into the country for personal use as confirmed and justified by accompanying medical records;

4) drugs that contain no amount of, or a different active ingredient, or less than 80 percent of the active ingredient it purports to possess, as distinguished from an adulterated drug, including reduction or less of efficacy due to expiration.

The first two would seem like stealing of intellectual property, much like faking signature jeans. Not that this crime should be condoned, but if it were merely brand-stealing and the essence of the product is as good as the genuine one (much like a fake Rolex would tell the same time as the genuine one), the poor would probably go for the fakes.

A pedicab driver/handyman told me the other day that he buys the medicine of his wife (whom I know and who's recuperating from a stroke) on a *tingi* basis—that is, two pieces at most. After a long day's work, he passes by a drugstore to buy *"dalawang piraso lang."* What if he learns about the cheaper ones sold somewhere?

Number 4 (less than 80-percent active ingredient) is the one that could be life-threatening.

The Bureau of Food and Drugs has initiated once again a nationwide campaign against counterfeit drugs. There have been buy-bust operations and closure orders of drugstore selling fakes. How long will this zeal last?

I've been seeing TV info-ads on counterfeit drugs, and how citizens could help curb the illegal activities the past weeks. Alas, the words and numbers on screen go so fast, one wonders whether the viewers could catch them at all. So here is the toll-free hotline that you can call to report a counterfeit or a counterfeiter: 1-800-10-FAKEMED.

The Coalition Against Counterfeit Medicines is among those behind the awareness campaign. It encourages people to be more vigilant so that drug stores would sell only the real thing. It calls on the government to enforce the laws, and on lawmakers to even tighten the laws against counterfeiters.

The 12 members of the coalition are the health, justice, and trade and industry departments, Philippine Medical Association, Drugstores Association of the Philippines, Mercury Drug Corp., Watson's, Zuellig Pharma, Pfizer, Philippine Pharmaceutical Association, GMA-7 and the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

How to tell a fake? A suspected counterfeit has these telltale signs: the appearance of the packaging or the medicine itself is different from the registered product. The printing on the packaging is somewhat blurred or of poor quality. There is no expiration date, lot or batch numbers. In some cases lot or batch numbers are excessively repeated. The brand name is larger than the generic name. The authenticity indicators such as holograms and tamper-evident seals are not always reliable as the counterfeiters can replicate these.

I just hope the campaign to separate the genuine branded drugs from the fakes does not kill the generic drugs and their manufacturers. I hope it does not put fear and doubt in the hearts of generic drug users who cannot afford the brand names.

Send feedback to cerespd@info.com.ph

Telephone

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

THAT'S THE NAME OF A GAME IN WHICH ONE person whispers something to another, who whispers to another, and so on down the line, to see just how garbled and unrecognizable the original message becomes through repetition.

Tuesday night saw a message (with the usual variations) zipping from phone to phone: generals loyal to the President were allegedly gathering the sentiments of battalion commanders down the line, to find out whether or not they felt the Palace would impose martial law. Media people, of course, went into overdrive checking if the message was true; AFP officers seemed to strenuously deny it. A consensus emerged—it was more likely some sort of a scheme on the part of the national security adviser. And so there were no stories about it on Wednesday: every lead proved to be a dud.

But what does the message's merry-go-round tell us? It says that while still firmly in the realm of speculation, some kind of emergency rule as the solution to the present situation isn't far from many minds. And with good reason. Martial law has been openly discussed for some time now.

Secretary Eduarto Ermita recently said, apropos of emergency rule: "In the first place, there's no reason for us to consider it. The President's action is always based on the current situation." Which is not, by any stretch of the imagination, a categorical denial—of possibility or even intent.

Around the same time (June 1), the AFP had Maj. Gen. Angel Honrado helpfully adding, "There are no bombings and anarchy in the streets to justify its declaration." The statement, of course, has become interesting, especially now that bombings are taking place (four in Metro Manila, as of most papers' last count).

"Accoustic warfare," some describe the bombings and, indeed, one wishes the English language could be more precise in describing the "explosions" that have captured the headlines lately. They've been more along the lines of snap, crackle, and pop, not the result of high-impact explosives.

And what of anarchy in the streets? After the AFP and PNP have perfected their crowd-control methods—to be sure, against the usual sources of "political noise"—who on earth could still provoke mayhem on the streets?

Enter Sigaw ng Bayan. Earlier this month, its spokesperson, Raul Lambino said: "What we are seeing now is an initiative from the people who are proposing Charter change. If we suppress their effort, they might resort to (an) extra-constitutional way to attain their political objective." Coming from anyone else, such a statement would have been branded inflammatory, irresponsible and seditious. But since Lambino is who he is, and his movement is what it is, the usual standards for increasingly restricted political speech most obviously do not apply.

Former President Ramos also hobbled forward to make a cameo appearance: he revealed a survey showing increased support for amendments, but with a twist: the French system, which—if memory serves—has always been the preference of Speaker Jose de Venecia, in contrast to Ramos' own, more purist parliamentary preferences. The price of longevity is utter surrender.

Meanwhile, the President played poker with the Senate and the latter folded: incoming Senate President Manuel Villar told outgoing Senate President Franklin Drilon they couldn't pass a budget in time. Meaning, the banner of the new Senate leadership henceforth would be a white flag? Probably not. But still, it allowed the Palace to crow victory.

On behalf of his boss, Executive Secretary Ermita rewarded Villar with a public kiss ("There is a saying in Filipino: 'A different king, a different attitude,'" the folksy secretary said). I'm sure Judas smooched Jesus with equal aplomb. Villar sadly embarked on his stewardship of the Senate with the presidential kiss of death. Whether he wanted it or not, it was precisely how the Palace wanted it: divide, and you conquer.

Seeing the President rain on Drilon's farewell parade while showering fatal affection on Villar's elevation, Lambino came back on stage. Focusing on the House's rejection of Senate's efforts to reach a compromise on amendments, Lambino grumbled, "Where is the sense of urgency in pushing Charter change if it took them two weeks to sit down for the second time, and now take another two months to meet again and discuss an all-too-pressing issue [such] as constitutional reforms?"

He also said: "Nine million of our people have seen such an urgency in signing up for the people's initiative in just two months ... but our honorable legislators chose to take their own sweet time in taking decisive steps to erase the chronic gridlocks that have long shackled growth and development." (Marcos had Lucky No. 7 as his trademark, Lambino relies on a Lucky No. 9.)

And the Palace ministerium for propaganda and enlightenment (no Goebbels, but lots of goblins) began trumpeting that it would be "all or nothing," and the "people's initiative" had its full support. Lambino came forward to complain: only San Juan and Makati City were holding up their efforts to formally demand a referendum. The President intoned a benediction on her faithful acolytes on Independence Day, where they were exorcised of the demon of fear (after all, the President had been less than warm to them after she tried to simulate cooperation with the Senate at the Ledac meeting in May).

Secretary Gabby Claudio handed down the ultimatum: Congress as constituent assembly soon, or—well, Lambino's said it—a revolt. Prevent anarchy at all costs, at whatever price, even if the price is the temporary abolition of Congress itself. Local government officials, freed of the need to run for office in 2007, could then devote themselves to organizing the "ratification" of a new, Palace-written, constitution. Today's revolution: autocracy.

Uncertainty

YOUNG BLOOD

Heidi Santos-Demaisip

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

ON MY WAY HOME FROM WORK ONE NIGHT, I TOOK the FX as always. I was the only passenger. And I immediately noticed that occupying the front seat were the driver, his wife and their three children.

It was not the first time I saw a driver bring his entire family with him. What really caught my attention was the driver's mood. It was around 8:30 p.m., and passengers seemed hard to find.

I heard the driver sigh: *"Haaay...buhay...pag inaalat ka nga naman* (Life really sucks when you run out of luck)."

Then his oldest son, who was seated beside him, repeated his the exact same words. At the age of 7 or 8 years, he already seemed to understand the meaning of those words, if the conviction he put behind them was anything to go by.

Then it struck me: How does an 8-year old react to situations like this? Does he fret that there wont be enough *kita* (income) for his father to buy enough food on the table for the entire family or an extra toy or shirt? Or does he just accept it as a fact of life like an adult? And how does a family of five survive on the meager income of a taxi driver who only gets to take home what is left of his earnings after the boundary and the expenses for gasoline are deducted?

I began to wonder: Is this the right environment to raise a child? Is it all right to expose him to the harsh realities of poverty?

That set me off to comparing my family of three to the driver's family of five.

I have a daughter who is 2 now years old. I can consider ourselves lucky by normal standards. My husband and I have a steady income. We're not rich, but we're all healthy. And we owe nobody some money. But still there are times when we get frustrated. There are times when we feel we're not earning enough, or we cannot save enough from what we earn. There are moments when, like the driver and his family, we feel that Lady Luck is not on our side.

In times like this, my husband and I would start our endless discussion about emigrating and working abroad. My parents are already there, but we have to wait 15 years before we can join them legally if we bank on their petition. That's too long a wait for us. We feel restless most of the time. We think that we need to get out of this country, and that we must do it while we're still young and there are plenty of opportunities open for us.

But I think the real reason we want to leave is that we don't want our 2-year-old daughter to be exposed to the kind of environment in which we are living now. We don't want her to see poverty and what it does to families, and how it debases the children. We dread hearing her ask us one day why street children have to knock on our car windows begging for money. And we dread even more the chance that she would hear the curses being thrown at us if we refuse to open a window and hand over a peso or two.

We don't want her to see fathers, mothers and children sniffing rugby in open daylight for everyone to see. We don't want her to see children as young as 2 years forced to sell sampaguitas or rags in the street. We don't want her to see children who, instead of studying in school or playing in the shade, must try to earn a living under the heat of the sun or drenched by the pouring rain.

Like any parent, we want what is best for our daughter. And that means first of all, living in a country which takes care of its people. We want her to grow up in an environment where people matter more than anything. We want her to grow up imbibing the values of honesty, integrity and discipline.

Of course, she can be taught these values at home. But reality is out there. We can't control what she will see and hear outside our home. And with the kind of society that we have, I don't feel I can expose my daughter to the real world.

When I arrived home that night, I looked at my daughter as she welcomed me with a wide smile on her face. I thought her smile was to chase away all my frustrations and fears. I looked at all her toys scattered on the floor, and I was reminded of the FX driver's three kids who probably fight over which of them will get to play their favorite toy. I looked at her and I thought I could never wipe that happy and innocent smile from her sweet face.

I have always dreamed about this country becoming great someday. I've always pictured myself growing old here and waiting to see it happen. Most of our friends have gone to some foreign lands with their families. But much as I want to jump on the bandwagon, something always holds me back. I don't want to give up my hopes for my country. I still want to do my part as a citizen of this land.

I want my daughter to grow up a Filipino in heart and mind. I know that if my husband and I would instill the right values in her, someday she will make a difference in our society.

When I look into my daughter's eyes, I see a brighter future and a whole new world of opportunities. But I just can't see it happening here, not in this kind of environment. And not now when everything seems to be uncertain.

Heidi Santos-Demaisip, 27, works as a field reporter for ABC 5.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

THEY SAID

Manufactured charges

"What's wrong with this government is that it lets loose legal nincompoops in the Inter-Agency Legal Action Group, led by the biggest legal ignoramus (National Security Adviser Norberto) Bert Gonzales, to manufacture a rebellion case against us."

—Party-list Rep. Satur Ocampo

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

ACQUISITION OF NETWORK EQUIPMENT

Project Description	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) & Source of Fund	Date/Time: Pre-bid Conference	Date/Time: Deadline Opening of Bids	Price of Bid Documents (non-refundable)
Supply, delivery & configuration of nine (9) units Core Routers for LAN Implementation requirements of 9 SSS Hub Branches	P8,000,000.00 (Hardware Component) CAPEX: Network Req't P1,980,000.00 (3-year Maintenance Service) OPEX-M/R Computer Equipment	July 03, 2006 2:00 p.m.	July 14, 2006 2:30 p.m.	P5,000.00
Supply & delivery of 82 units Closed-type Equipment Rack	P1,850,000.00 CAPEX - Network Equipment	July 03, 2006 2:30 p.m.	July 14, 2006 3:00 p.m.	P1,500.00

1. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.
2. The SSS now invites Bids from eligible bidders for the proposed acquisition of the above equipment. Supply, delivery and installation of the GOODS are required within **thirty (30) calendar days** after contract signing/receipt of Purchase Order (PO). The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, Instruction to Bidders (ITB).
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened The process for the eligibility check is described in Section I of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the ***SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM*** and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee. The method of payment will be on a cash basis payable at the SSS Cashiering Department, SSS Main Bldg., Ground floor, upon accomplishment of SSS Form R-6. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. The Pre-Bid Conference shall be held at the Green Room, 12th Floor, SSS Main Bldg., East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered at the Green Room, 12th Floor, SSS Main Building on the deadline specified above. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form and amount indicated in the Bid Tender Documents. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be held at the Green Room, 12th Floor, SSS Main Bldg., East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the given address
9. The ***SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM*** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders

Bid and Awards Committee
The Secretariat
6th Floor, SSS Main Building
East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel # 922-2991; 924-7380; 920-6401 local 5491
Email – bac@sss.gov.ph
Facsimile number – (02) 924-7380

THE CHAIRMAN
BIDS & AWARDS COMMITTEE

(PDI - June 15, 2006)

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation

INVITATION FOR BIDS

Date : June 12, 2006
Loan No.: CALYON
Contract No.: Sp06.NPTBP.Vt-0073

1. The ***National Power Corporation (NPC)*** has received a loan from the ***Buyer's Credit Facility arranged by CALYON through a Master Credit Arrangement*** for ***Northern Panay Project*** and it is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contract ***Survey, Design, Supply of Materials/Equipment and Erection/Installation and Commissioning of Northern Panay 138/69kV Transmission Backbone Project.***

   Bidders if not a manufacturer shall purchase the equipment and materials from eligible source countries listed in the Calyon's Buyer's Credit Facility (United States, Austria, Belgium, England, Denmark, South Korea, Netherlands, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland) and all expenditures for the plant and equipment mader under the Contract will be limited to such plant and equipment.
2. The ***National Transmission Corporation (TRANSCO)*** administering the implementation of the said project, now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the:

   Survey, Design, Supply of Materials/Equipment and Erection/Installation and Commissioning of Northern Panay 138/69kV Transmission Backbone Project.
3. Bidders may obtain further information from and inspect and acquire the bidding documents at the ***Office of the Manager, Bids and Contracts Management Department,*** *Ground Floor, Power Center, National Transmission Corporation, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City, Metro Manila, Telephone No.: 981-2212, 981-2213, 981-4652; Telefax No.: 921-23-08.*
4. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested eligible bidders starting June 14, 2006 upon submission of a written application to the above office, and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of ***Forty Thousand Pesos (PHP 40,000.00).***
5. A two-envelope bidding procedure will be adopted. Bidders are to submit simultaneously two (2)-sealed envelopes, one (1) containing the technical proposal and one (1) containing the price proposal. Initially only the technical proposals will be opened. Technical proposals which are submitted by non-qualified bidders or which are not substantially responsive will be rejected. The substantially responsive technical proposals that have been submitted by qualified bidders are discussed with the bidders and the bidders are requested for full compliance. The bidders may or may not submit a supplementary price proposal, which contain the changes in price resulting from the discussed changes in the technical proposals. The original price proposal and the supplementary price proposal are opened simultaneously in public.
6. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of:

   One Hundred Seventy Six Thousand Two Hundred Seven US Dollars (US$176,207.00)

   The bid security must be included in the technical proposal.

   Pre-bid Conference shall be conducted on July 25, 2006.

   The deadline for the submission of bids will be on August 12, 2006 at 1:30 P.M. at the aforementioned address. Late submissions will be rejected.
7. The technical proposals together with the bid security will be opened immediately thereafter in the presence of bidder's representatives who choose to attend.
8. The price proposals will be opened in the presence of the bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the time and date and at the address to be advised by the Employer after approval of the evaluation of the technical proposals.
9. The total contract duration for the project is **450 calendar days.**
10. TRANSCO reserves the right to reject any or all Bids without offering any reaons, waive any required formality therein and to make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government.
11. All communications shall be addressed to the Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee at aforementioned address.

(Sgd.) GUILLERMO R. REDOBLADO
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – June 15, 22 & 29, 2006)

AFP unfairly blamed for spate of killings

WE VIEW WITH GRAVE CONCERN AND share the serious apprehension of the citizens of this country over the series of killings that Commission on Human Rights Chair Purificacion Quisimbing said constitutes a "pattern of impunity."

We take exception to the unfair and rash statement that conveniently points to the Armed Forces of the Philippines as particularly responsible for these executions. While the government remains duty-bound to protect human rights, the AFP—as an agent of government—should not be hastily accused of crimes that are yet to be investigated.

The AFP has taken strong measures in upholding human rights and has institutionalized certain measures to promote the International Humanitarian Law. The AFP leadership has even integrated human rights and international humanitarian law courses in military schoolings at all levels. Soldiers are properly briefed and oriented each time a military operation is conducted.

The spate of killings is a valid and legitimate cause for alarm, and the AFP fully supports and cooperates with the Philippine National Police in solving these crimes. While some unscrupulous individuals and groups are quick to put down the AFP and the PNP, it is lamentable that we tend to be soft on the Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army hierarchy and members. Unfortunately, these groups have conveniently used the media in advancing their malicious intents.

Records show that the CPP/NPA has engaged in vicious, cruel, ruthless, systematic killings—on orders of its high command—of its own people at the slightest suspicion. Ironically, these condemnable acts do not get the same level of condemnation from peace-loving citizens and groups.

Let us be fair and let us refrain from issuing hasty generalizations and sweeping statements that unfairly demean the credibility and reputation of the noble men and women who have given up the comfort of life to serve the country. Give the AFP the respect it deserves; for after all, even soldiers have been victims of such crimes.

—TRISTAN M. KISON,
colonel (GSC) PA, chief,
Public Information Office,
Armed Forces of the Philippines,
Camp Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo,
Quezon City

LETTERS

Commercial aquaculture: profits don't pay for environment loss?

WE THANK JUAN MERCADO FOR HIS informative column on the "Fish meal trap." (PDI, 5/23/06)

It is precisely because of the fish meal trap that we in Tambuyog regard intensive aquaculture as unsustainable. Aquaculture is causing the massive overfishing of "trash fishes" to satisfy the growing demand for fish meal.

Besides, intensive brackish water aquaculture is largely to blame for the 75-percent destruction of the country's mangrove forests—from more than 400,000 hectares in the 1960s to only 117,000 hectares at present.

Besides, overstocking and overfeeding, especially in fish cages, have resulted in water pollution and fish kills.

What fuels intensive (or commercial) aquaculture is the increasing demand in the world market for farmed fish. Ironically, market demand in rich countries such as the United States and Japan has made farmed fish too expensive for the majority of Filipinos. The price of export-grade *sugpo*, for example, is easily five or six times that of *galunggong*.

Thus, we need to reexamine the long-term cost and benefit of intensive aquaculture production for export. We may find out that the dollar profits are not worth the costs of long-term environmental destruction.

Finally, the excesses of aquaculture can be checked only if communities in coastal areas will have primary rights on the use of the coastal resources, over and above the profit motive of aquaculture investors.

—JAIME ESCOBER JR.,
information officer,
Tambuyog Development Center,
91 V. Luna Road Extension,
Sikatuna Village,
Quezon City 1100

Time to get angry

CONRADO DE QUIROS, IN TWO COLUMNS (PDI, 5/25/06, 5/30/06) asked "When are we going to get angry at this?" The columns gives a very disturbing picture of the true state of the nation today. The madness, according to him, has gone on long enough: the two Gonzalezes (Norberto and Raul) have gone crazy in their anti-communist hysteria, promoting the wholesale murder of pastors, church workers, militant community organizers and journalists, most of them identified with Bayan Muna and the radical Left. This is martial law all over again! Even worse! This is state terrorism. When are we going to get angry at this?

Christ got angry when He saw the temple, His Father's house, desecrated and made into a robbers' den. After His resurrection, He made the whole world His Father's house and the people His Body. We don't have to be a rabid Catholic—De Quiros isn't—in order to see how the world and the Body of Christ is being desecrated today. Why can't we get angry enough and drive out those Gonzalezes and Palparans and, yes, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo herself, out of our government today? They have made our house into a robbers' den.

What is more frightening than to see us Christians pass by those "corpses" that litter our pavement every day, and all we do is just shrug our shoulder. I am of one mind with De Quiros' prophetic words.

—ARNOLD VAN VUGT,
Horeb Center,
Cagayan de Oro City

Daroy's cartoons

I JUST WANT TO EXpress my appreciation for the consistently excellent cartoons of Gilbert Daroy in the INQUIRER's editorial section. He has the talent to present in a very pointed and subtle way current issues of great significance and interest to our country.

His talent adds prestige to INQUIRER's already outstanding editorial section and the newspaper can count on my continuing patronage.

—JUN SALVADOR,
Tower One
& Exchange Plaza,
Ayala Triangle,
Ayala Avenue,
1226 Makati City

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Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Floreño G. Solmirano

INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Laki Iwan: Mangyan, philanthropist'

By Madonna T. Virola
San Jose, Occidental Mindoro

LONG after his death on March 21, Laki Iwan de Jesus, a Buhid Mangyan, is remembered by the community of Sitio Danlog, Barangay Monteclaro in San Jose town, Occidental Mindoro for the parcels of land he donated to different schools that he hoped would ensure the education of the next Mangyan generations.

One of the schools, the Paaralang Mangyan na Angkop sa Kulturang Aalagaan (Pamana Ka), has grown in terms of student population and facilities.

When Laki Iwan saw the high school's program, he offered to sign a document to ensure that the land would not be taken back by his family and relatives who had earlier agreed on the donation.

"It was funny because Laki Iwan was the one who realized the need for the document and not us who are called literates," said Sr. Aristea "Thea" Bautista of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, director of Pamana Ka.

Laki Iwan had never gone to school, but his donation has left a deep imprint on Danlog, which can be reached by crossing rivers during the rainy season, or about an hour of travel from the town proper during the dry season.

According to customary laws, a land tiller under the ancestral domain law has the right to the land and may donate it, according to Fr. Rod Salazar, director of the Mangyan Mission in the province.

Revered

Before he died, Laki Iwan was deemed the oldest member of the community. Danlog folk believed he could have been more than 90 years old because of the prewar stories he had related, like when he bartered bananas for American canned goods.

The revered elder had five children. His wife, Darag de Jesus, died of tuberculosis 10 years ago.

His three surviving children are Lay-ot Gana, Lubad de Jesus and Bacay de Jesus.

Lay-ot, the son of Darag and her first husband, said Laki Iwan continued to plant and share his produce with his children and grandchildren, even after the death of his wife.

He has more than 80 grandchildren and great grandchildren, and he used to tell them "*mag-aral mabuti para din sa inyo at para makatulong sa tribo* (Study well for your tribe's future and your own)."

Among clan members, Laki Iwan is a legend for his boundless generosity. They recounted that he stocked food from his *kaingin* just to give away to those who needed it.

"He would always give us bananas for food and when he had none to give, he would say 'sorry,'" said a grandchild.

Another grandchild noted how he was known for keeping his word. "He had *palabra de honor*," he fondly remembered.

Calendar

Laki Iwan once told students of Pamana Ka in Filipino: "I didn't go to school but I am giving you the chance to enter school."

The high school had just graduated 10 Mangyan students, with seven of them going to a college in town. Six of the graduates plan to take up education and one will pursue an accounting course.

Three of the graduates have applied to Pamulaan, the first indigenous peoples' college in Davao City, said Sister Thea.

This school year, which will open in September, Pamana Ka expects an enrollment of 43 students, including five Alangan Mangyan. "I have a complete set of second-liners," said Sister Thea.

The school year follows the planting calendar. Classes end in June and school break is from July to August, which are deemed planting months. In the regular school calendar, the period is equivalent to the April-May vacation period.

At first, Laki Iwan donated land for the site of the Danlog community. He consulted his children on giving up more pieces of his land for school sites.

From 1999 to 2002, the benefactor, who also served as barangay chair, donated patches of his *kaingin* to a school and would bring his produce of vegetables, *buri*, bamboo and bananas to the place

The *gurangon* or old man also lent another piece of land for the Practical Arts subject called Kaingin of Pamana Ka. The fruits of the land went back to the students.

"As he ensured education for all generations, he was named 'Ninuno ng Katutubong Pagkatuto' (Father of Indigenous Studies) on April 7 and Pamana Ka's school's library was launched and named after him," said Sister Thea.

His betel grinder, consisting of a bamboo and a piece of metal encased in a glass container, was displayed in front of the concrete library.

His grandchildren love to say how Laki Iwan could carry 100 bananas, a big piece of bamboo, or more than 60 kilos of cogon at a time, even as he worked on his kaingin all day.

"We cried when news of *lolo*'s death came because he was still strong," they said.

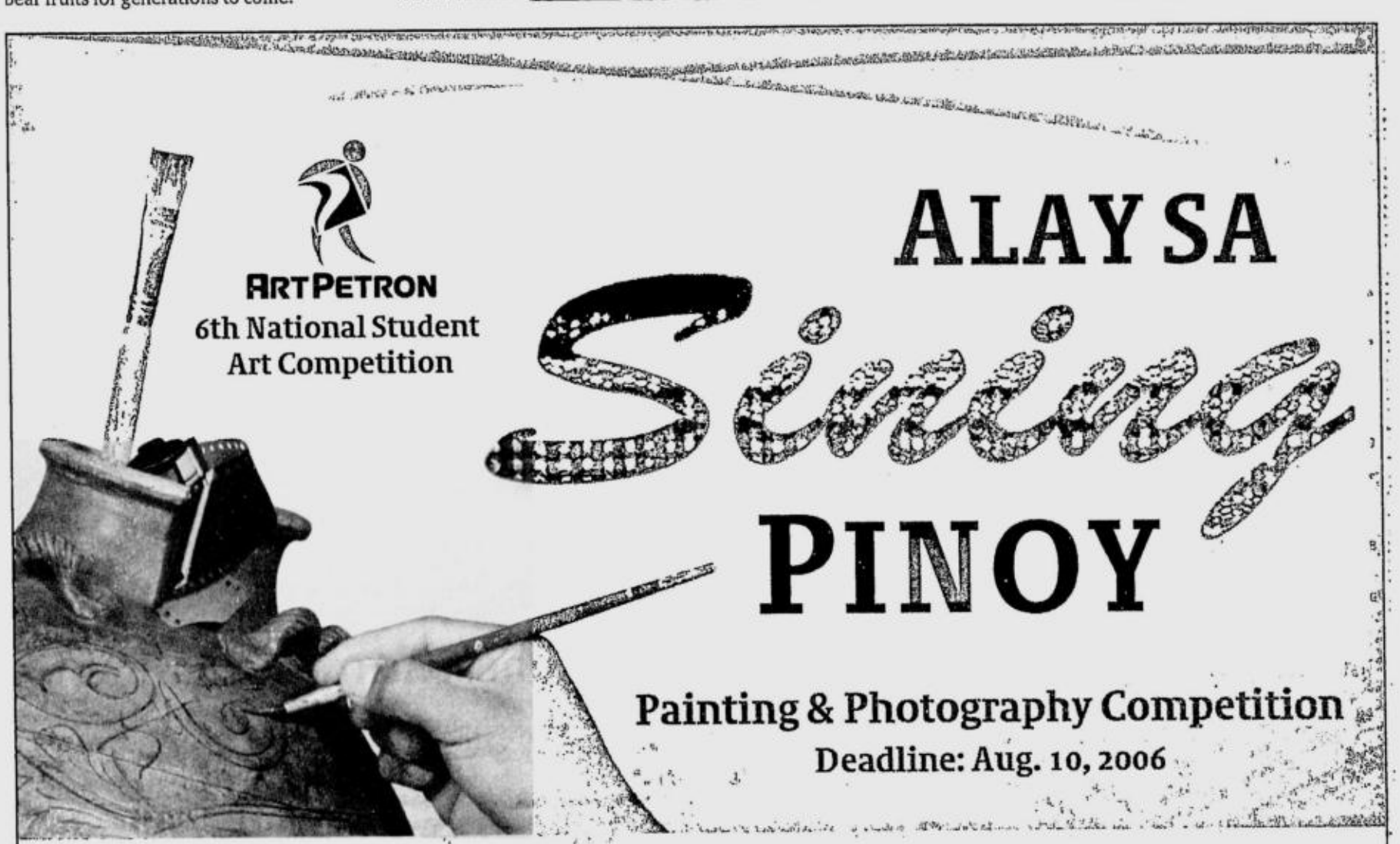
At about 8 a.m. on March 21, Laki Iwan was seen going around the community and looking for betel nut or *lunang*.

At around 3 p.m., Agmiraw Inungan, a Mangyan, found the white-haired man lying on the ground after he was seen walking in the Tialag spring and munching "*chichiria*" (snack foods). He had bruises on the forehead and his slippers were stuck in a grassy area.

Laki Iwan met the accident at around noon. As part of the tradition, family members, relatives and friends brought the body directly to the cemetery in Liphan at around 8 p.m.

But for the Danlog folk and all who came to visit the place, the seeds he has planted will bear fruits for generations to come.

Mangyan high school students enrol at the Pamana Ka that follows the planting season. MADONNA T. VIROLA



With the theme ***Alay sa Sining Pinoy (Diwa ng Pagkatuto)***, ArtPetron features folk and indigenous arts in recognition of the creativity and sense of community of Filipinos. Focus is on the collective expression of a cultural community such as the Ifugaos, T'boli, Bagobo, or Maranao, or a particular town like Betis, Vigan, Cebu, Bacolod. Emphasis is on the intricacy of the design or the uniqueness of the artform by artists/artisans who are mostly self-taught and are dictated by a commitment to preserve their community or town's identity and culture.

The rediscovery of our arts is recapturing our soul as Filipinos. With our textile, sculptures, pottery, baskets and mats taking center stage, we honor our ancestors and appreciate our artistic roots.

The painting/photography competition is open to all Filipino college students and students of art/photography whether in a university program or a tutorial or museum-based painting or photography class. Age bracket of participants is limited to 15-28 years old only.

Application forms are available from all colleges, universities, participating Petron Service Centers, bulk plants and offices nationwide, or at the Project Secretariat c/o Studio 5 Designs, 28 Paseo de Roxas corner Jupiter St., Bel-Air Village, Makati City. Telephone numbers are 8909318 or 8953975. A downloadable application form is available at our website: www.artpetron.com.

WATERCOLOR/WATER-BASED MEDIA
- The surface to be used for this category must be watercolor paper or illustration board.
- The size of the artwork must not be more than 4 ft. x 4 ft. (unframed).

OIL/ACRYLIC
- The surface to be used for this category must either be canvas, canvas paper or wood.
- The size of the artwork must not be more than 4 ft. x 4 ft. (uframed).

BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY
- The size of the artwork must not be smaller than 8 in. x 10 in. and must not exceed 10 in. x 15 in. (unframed).
- All entries must be original and must have been photographed after February 28, 2005. They must not have been previously exhibited or awarded a prize in another contest, corrected, or manipulated in any post production activity. Entrants must declare the type of camera used. Digital photography is allowed. Filters may be used.

Submit entries to Petron bulk plants (deadline is Aug. 3, 2006); or to the Project Secretariat c/o Studio 5 Designs (deadline is Aug. 10, 2006). Entries sent to the Project Secretariat via the standard registered package or by courier must be postmarked July 1, 2006.

ARTPETRON
6th National Student Art Competition — OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM

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TEL. NO.: FAX:
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SCHOOL ADDRESS:
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PETRON
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A total of Php730,000 cash prizes await talented winners:

- Six (6) first prize winners (three (3) from each Painting Category) will receive Php50,000 and a trophy made by National Artist and Chairman of the Art Petron Board of Judges Napoleon V. Abueva.
- Six (6) runners-up (three (3) from each Painting Category) will receive Php20,000 each and an ArtPetron trophy.
- The Photography Category will have six (6) first prize winners who will receive Php30,000 each and an ArtPetron trophy.
- Six (6) runners-up will receive Php15,000 each and an ArtPetron trophy.

For full details and contest forms, please go to your nearest Petron service station or call the office of the Project Secretariat or download an application form at www.artpetron.com.

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Masbate gov cleared of rival's slay

By DJ Yap

MASBATE GOV. ANTONIO Kho was cleared of charges he masterminded the murder of political rival Tito Espinosa, a former congressman.

Kho, with two others, was acquitted yesterday of Espinosa's murder by a Quezon City court that found insufficient evidence to link the former congressman to the crime.

But Blas Rosario, the gunman who had implicated Kho only to retract later, was found guilty and sentenced to life imprisonment by Judge Ma. Theresa Yadao of Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 81.

He was also ordered to pay P500,000 in damages and P50,000 in indemnity to Espinosa's heirs.

In a 25-page decision, Yadao said the prosecution presented only circumstantial evidence and failed to show direct proof connecting Kho and his co-accused Roberto Pidlaoan and Arnel Quidato to the murder.

The decision covered only four of the original nine accused, which had included former Uzbitondo, Pangasinan mayor Rogelio Soriano and former Uson, Masbate mayor Nelson Lim, who died on Jan. 17, 2006 and Nov. 11, 2003, respectively.

The rest of the accused, Tirso Tamondong and Jacinto Ramos, have not been caught, while one unidentified suspect was never identified and arrested.

KHO

ESPINOSA

Court records showed that Espinosa, then representative of Masbate's first district, was aboard a red Ferosa, cruising along Commonwealth Avenue near IBP Road in the early evening of Feb. 28, 1995 when he was shot by an assailant in an ambush.

He was rushed to the Malvar General Hospital but he died while being prepared for an emergency operation.

Just before his death, however, he told his nephew: "Misel, ang may kagagawan nito si (the ones who did it were) Congressman Kho, Mayor Nestor Lim and Susana Lim."

On March 2, police arrested Rosario in Quezon City on a separate murder charge, but investigators noticed his striking resemblance to sketches of Espinosa's gunman, based on eyewitness accounts.

The next day, Rosario, who was positively identified by witnesses as Espinosa's killer, signed an extra-judicial confession admitting to shooting and killing the congressman, on the orders of Soriano and Lim.

He said he had met with the two, who were accompanied by Pidlaoan and Tamondong, on Feb. 10 or 11 in a restaurant on Quezon Avenue. Rosario also narrated how Espinosa's killing was carried out.

Pidlaoan, who was arrested as a result of Rosario's confession, also executed an extra-judicial confession in which he admitted to his role in the murder, being Soriano's henchman. He would later recant his statement and say that he had been tortured into making it, a charge Yadao found credible, since he had torture marks on him.

On March 13, Rosario signed a second extra-judicial confession, this time implicating Kho, who was then representative of Masbate's third district, and his police bodyguard Quidato.

But for his defense, Rosario retracted both confessions, saying he had been tortured by his arresting officers. He said he had not known Kho and Lim before Feb. 28, 1995.

The court said the evidence against Kho, Pidlaoan and Quidato did not hold under scrutiny and there was reasonable doubt on their guilt.

Yadao, however, said there was direct evidence linking Rosario to the murder.

Before the decision was handed out, Rosario had already been spending a life term at the National Bilibid Prison in Muntinlupa for a separate murder conviction meted by a Dagupan City court, while Pidlaoan was under detention at Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig City.

Both Kho and Quidato were out on bail.

Rep. Narciso Bravo Jr. (1st district, Masbate), son-in-law of the late former congressman Tito Espinosa, said the family was disappointed.

"Justice was not served," Bravo said as he wondered why the gunman, who had no reason to kill the former congressman, was convicted when the alleged co-conspirators were acquitted.

He said the judge's reason for the acquittal of the gunman's co-conspirators was very shallow.

"We were sad but we cannot do anything. We still believe in the justice system of the country," Bravo said.

"Many have died in Masbate, ironically all political adversaries of (Gov. Antonio) Kho. The case could have also given them justice," he added. He did not elaborate.

Former presidential assistant for Bicol affairs Mario Espinosa, a nephew of Tito Espinosa, said the Espinosa family was saddened by the court decision to acquit Kho. *Dona Pazzibugan in Manila and Ephraim Aguilar, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

WHAT WENT BEFORE

FEB. 28, 1995—Masbate Rep. Tito Espinosa is ambushed by two gunmen when his vehicle stopped at a red light at the intersection of Commonwealth Avenue and Batasan Road in Quezon City. He dies two hours later at the Malvar General Hospital on Commonwealth Avenue.

MARCH 1995—A sketch based on the description of witnesses leads to the arrest of alleged hit man Blas Rosario. In a testimony before a Quezon City prosecutor, Rosario implicates then Masbate third district Rep. Antonio Kho as the mastermind; Mayor Rogelio Soriano of Urbiztondo, Pangasinan; Mayor Nestor Lim of Uson, Masbate; Roberto Pidlaoan and Tirso Tomandong, alleged back ups; SPO2 Arnel Quidato, Kho's bodyguard; PO3 Jacinto Ramos, Soriano's bodyguard; and "Jun," alleged driver of the getaway vehicle.

MAY 31, 1995—Murder charges are filed against the nine suspects at the Quezon City Regional Trial Court.

JUNE 8, 1995—Kho and Quidato surrender to Quezon City Judge Maximiano Asuncion a day after arrest warrants were issued against them and other suspects.

JULY 17, 1995—Rosario pleads not guilty during his arraignment.

JULY 27, 1995—Soriano surrenders to a Quezon City judge after almost four months of hiding. He professes innocence.

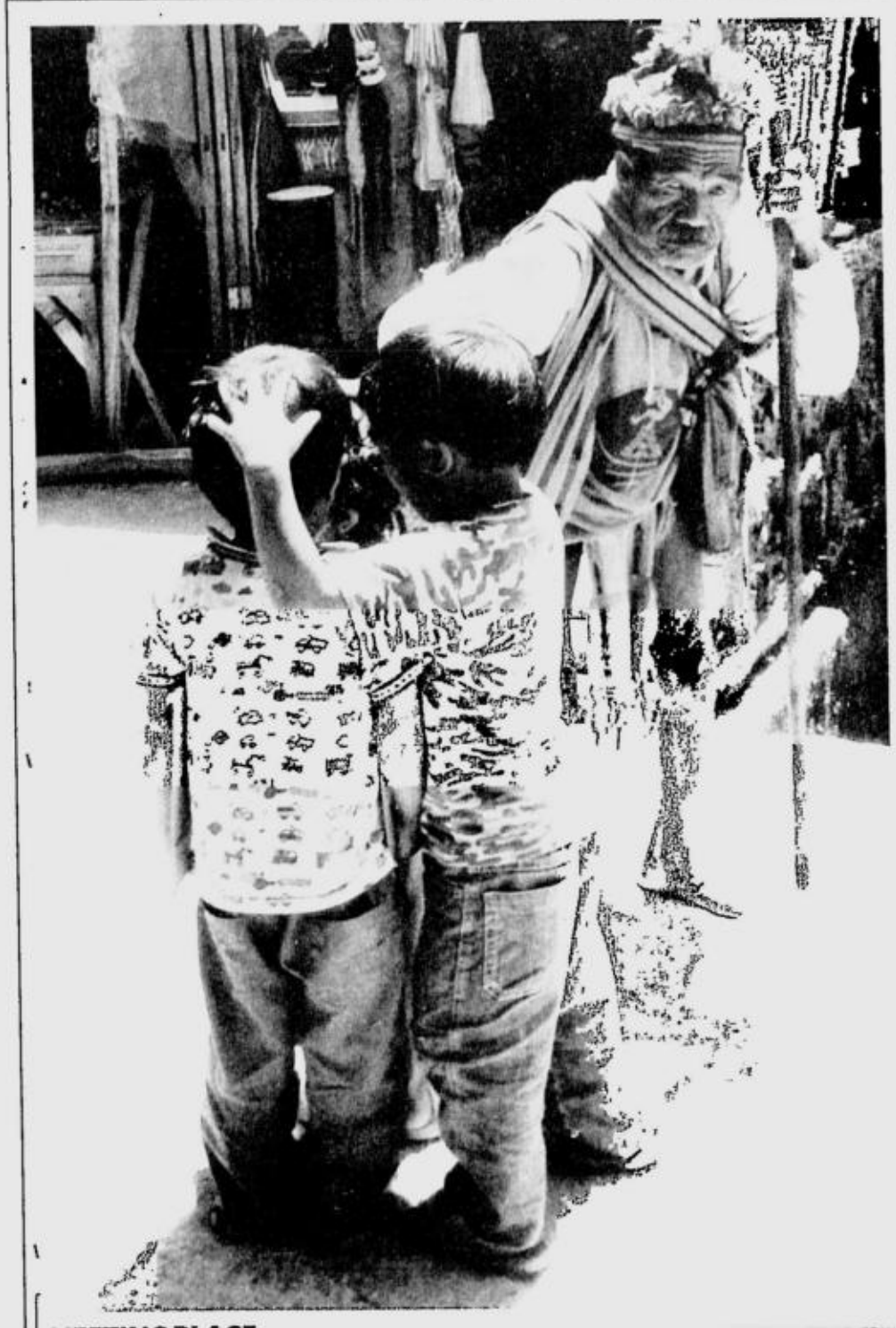
APRIL 15, 1996—Soriano's petition for bail is granted.

NOV. 18, 1996—Kho and Quidato's petition for bail is granted.

DEC. 23, 1997—Lim is arrested by police after stepping out of a massage parlor in Malate, Manila. The third most wanted person in Bicol resists arrest, getting bruised in the process. Lim had a P60,000-prize on his head.

MAY 2004—Kho is elected governor of Masbate.

PDI RESEARCH



MEETING PLACE EV ESPIRITU/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Ifugao children gather to portray their elders huddled in the dap-ay, a community meeting place.

Honest Army major dies in motorcycle crash

AN HONEST ARMY MAJOR WHO RETURNED P300,000 to a bank died before he could be given recognition by his superiors.

Maj. Roberto Manlapat, a disbursing officer of the Army's 7th Infantry Division based in Fort Magsaysay in Palayan City, Nueva Ecija, was riding his motorcycle when he met an accident in Cabanatuan City on June 4.

Manapat had returned P300,000 in excess withdrawal to the Land Bank of the Philippines branch in Cabanatuan City on May 19.

The Philippine Army yesterday announced that the Army leadership would posthumously award Manlapat's family a Command Plaque of Appreciation on June 19 during the regular flag-raising ceremony at the Fort Bonifacio Army headquarters.

The same plaque of appreciation would also be given to TSgt. Danilo Morga, who withdrew the money with Manlapat.

According to Mernilo Ocampo, head of the Land Bank Cabanatuan branch, Manlapat and Morga made a withdrawal of P17 million which represented the May salaries of the officers and men of the division and their mid-year bonus.

Upon arrival in the camp, he requested Morga to help him recount the money.

Manlapat did not hesitate to return the money, saying "it does not belong to me." He immediately called LBP officials and returned the money on the same day it was withdrawn.

On Sunday morning, his colleagues at the Archbishop Gabriel Reyes Assembly of the Knights of Columbus were supposed to surprise him with a citation.

It was then that they learned about the accident. The citation was read during the assembly's ceremony at the Fort Magsaysay Catholic Church.

Manlapat, 52, was recently installed a fourth degree Knights of Columbus member. A native of Arayat, Pampanga, Manlapat joined the Army in 1974 as a private and was commissioned as a second lieutenant in 1983.

He was scheduled for interview next week for his possible promotion to lieutenant colonel. He was finance officer in Camp Aguinaldo for six years until he was transferred to the 7th ID two years ago.

"They made the withdrawal before lunch. After lunch, they returned the P300,000," Ocampo related.

"I wrote them a letter saying thank you. The mistake was made by our tellers," he added.

Ocampo directly wrote Manlapat on May 22 expressing the Land Bank management's "gratitude, sincerity and recognition" for what he and Morga did.

Ocampo said he heard the news from Manlapat's colleagues. "Maybe it's the will of God," he quietly said.

Bacarro said even before Manlapat's death, the Army has already decided to give him an award. *Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Reclamation plan near Silliman not dead yet

By Alex V. Pal
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—JUST WHEN everyone thought the reclamation issue was dead and gone, the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) has again signified its intention to push through with its reclamation project and is seeking an Environmental Compliance Certificate (ECC) this year.

The move was timed with the assumption of Dr. Ben Malayang III as the new president of Silliman University, which staunchly opposed any moves to reclaim the sea in front of Silliman University.

The opposition from Silliman and other nongovernment organizations forced the PPA to announce that it was abandoning the reclamation idea and would instead build its passenger terminal near the Coast Guard Station inside the pier.

But Malayang said in his first press conference on June 1 that Silliman would "cooperate with the city" as a citizen of the city.

Malayang also said close collaboration with government would prevent tension, which resulted from the university's refusal to allow the PPA to pursue its reclamation project.

Vice Mayor William Ablong was already reported to have endorsed the proposal of the PPA to apply for an Environmental Compliance Certificate for its reclamation project this year.

Ablong said the city council welcomed the application for the conduct of an impact assessment study and that data are needed for sound decision-making.

Ablong said the decision highly depended on the findings of technical experts. On the construction of a passenger terminal building, he said several opportunities were missed by the city due to vehement objections in the past.

This time, he said, the city would see to it that the passenger terminal building would be realized in front of the offices of the Bureau of Customs and the Coast Guard without necessarily reclaiming the sea.

Quezon flood victims see hope in jethropa

LUCENA CITY—RESIDENTS OF calamity-stricken villages in the Real-Infanta-General Nakar (Reina) towns in the northern part of Quezon have one more livelihood program coming with the planting of jethropa trees, or "tuba-tubang silangan" in the local dialect.

Quezon Board Member Eladio Pasamba, who initiated the project, called the program as an alternative source of livelihood for the thousands of calamity victims in the 2004 disaster, most of them still in the process of returning to their normal lives.

Last week, some 400 beneficiaries attended the jethropa planting and production seminar in Infanta town, jointly facilitated by representatives from the Nestle Philippines and the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority.

Pasamba said Nestle will provide the jethropa seedlings to an initial group of 2,000 residents and later purchase the dried fruits from its harvest.

He encouraged the target beneficiaries to form cooperatives to qualify for fund loans from the Land Bank of the Philippines for the construction of processing plants.

Three kilograms of jethropa reportedly produces a liter of diesel and its by-products can be processed into organic fertilizer.

The project seeks to cover at least 10,000 hectares of farm lands in the three towns that had been devastated by flash floods coming from the Sierra Madre mountain ranges in November 2004.

A one-hectare area planted to jetropha in a two-meter-by-two-meter plot can accommodate 1,000 plants and another 1,000 inter-crop plants.

Based on studies, one hectare could yield a minimum of P60,000 for the farmer in every harvest.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has encouraged local officials nationwide to invest in the development and production of jethropa trees, which she described as "a perfect substitute" for oil-based diesel.

The government has earmarked some P500 million for the production of jethropa biodiesel.

The Philippines is heavily dependent on imported oil for its energy requirements.

"The world is again suffering from spiralling oil prices. We have to tap and develop alternative and renewable sources of energy," Pasamba said. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

THE JETHROPA tree, an alternative to fossil fuel.

Board junks resolution vs Japan firm exec

BALANGA CITY—THE PROVINCIAL board last week set aside its resolution in April that declared persona non grat an executive of a Japanese firm building the P21-billion Subic-Clark-Tarlac Expressway (SCTEX).

The board, in a resolution on April 12, declared Kazuhico Chabayashi, project manager of Obayashi Corp. in charge of the Bataan segment of the expressway project, persona non grata for allegedly defying a request from the provincial government to report on the source of filling materials for the project and pay local taxes.

But in another resolution issued on June 5, the board said Obayashi Corp. did not violate any order.

It said Chabayashi was not responsible for the report to the provincial government of the volume and source of filling materials used by the firm.

The board said the province should instead provide checkpoints and personnel to monitor and collect quarry taxes.

Securing certifications of payment of sand and gravel taxes from the provincial government, it said, is the sole responsibility of sub-contractors and not the general contractor.

In a letter to the Bases Conversion Development Authority, Akmichi Hamajima, general manager of Obayashi Corp.'s office in the Philippines, said his firm had investigated the charges against Chabayashi and found them baseless.

Hamajima said an investigation made by his office revealed that Bataan officials were fed false information that led to the declaration of the Japanese executive as persona non grata.

Chabayashi, according to the letter, "has made serious efforts and taken proper action to comply fully with the requirements imposed by the provincial government."

The project was expected to boost business in Central Luzon as it was designed to cut travel time from Clark to Subic and vice versa to about 30 minutes.

It was embroiled in a controversy, however, when project proponents tried to parry efforts to have the project rebidded.

Obayashi Corp. said in a letter to the BCDA that it was trying to work out a smooth relationship with the provincial government.

Greg Refraccion, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Protests greet Palparan men in C. Luzon

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Protests mounted as Army troopers under the command of Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan Jr. of the 7th Infantry Division prowled three cities and six towns in Pampanga and Bulacan, reports reaching the INQUIRER said.

The Kilusan para sa Pambansang Demokrasya called Palparan's latest move as a "gradual constriction all over again," referring to "Oplan Lambat Bitag" that the Army official led in 1985 when he was commander of the 24th Infantry Battalion in Pampanga and Bataan.

The Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, on the other hand, called Palparan's recent actions the "advent of intensified killings of militants."

Just on the fourth day of military operations by the troopers, two transport leaders were reported missing by the human rights advocate Karapatan.

But Eduardo Pineda and Celestino Roman, of Barangay Pulong Bulo in Angeles City, surfaced on Wednesday.

Col. Ricardo Visaya, 69th Infantry Battalion commander, said the two men were "invited for questioning" because they were on a list of suspected rebel sympathizers.

"They were [sought] so they could clear themselves," Visaya said in a phone interview.

The battalion established 10 detachments in Angeles City, four in this Pampanga capital and three in Mabalacat town.

Karapatan also reported that organizers of the Workers Alliance in Region (WAR) III, a chapter of the Kilusang Mayo Uno, had stopped going to their office after soldiers began monitoring their movements.

Visaya said his men were not tailing WAR III personnel.

Aurora Broquil, KPD-Central Luzon chair, expressed fear for the safety of their leaders and members.

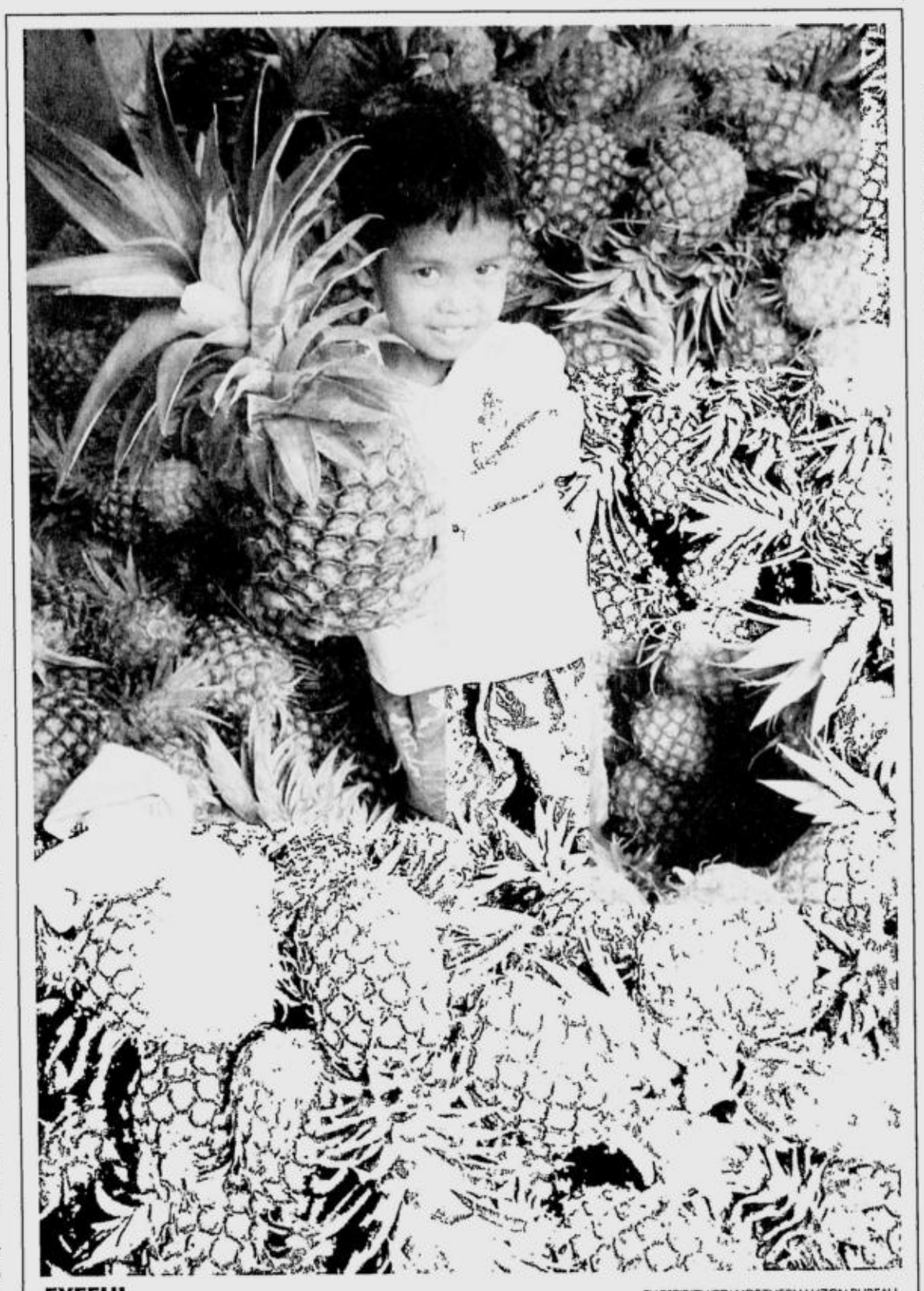
She said at least 2,000 soldiers were assigned to Pampanga and Bataan during the implementation of "Oplan Lambat Bitag."

She said activists were killed, union leaders were harassed and food blockades and the fielding of soldiers in villages were done during that time.

From 2005 to June this year, the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, its sectoral organizations and party-list allies lost 77 leaders and members to the killings and 39 others to abductions in Central Luzon. KPD saw four of its leaders killed in the same period.

Bayan and the KPD noted that the killings and disappearances stepped up when Palparan returned to the region as commander of the 7th Infantry Division.

Broquil said the deployment by Palparan of some 500 troopers in the urban centers and the setting up of at least 57 detachments there "aim to expand, reinforce and sharpen the fangs of state terrorism [under President Macapagal-Arroyo]."



EYEFUL EV ESPIRITU/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Ripe pineapples are harvested from farms in Nueva Vizcaya and are distributed in fruit stalls in Banaue, Ifugao. This boy helps tend his family's fruit store in Barangay Poblacion in Banaue. He sells the pineapple for P25 each.

ROUNDUP

Mobile clinic opens

DAGUPAN CITY—Speaker Joe de Venecia on Monday inaugurated a mobile diagnostic, X-ray and dental clinic that will service city residents. The clinic is an air-conditioned, six-wheel Isuzu van equipped with a generator, an examination room, X-ray machine and other medical equipment and supplies. De Venecia said ultrasound and ECG examinations and minor surgeries like circumcision, blood testing and eye care services could be done in the clinic. He said four other mobile diagnostic units would be assigned to Pangasinan's fourth district, which he represents. *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Army calms down Cotabato folk

COTABATO CITY—An Army officer has urged residents here and elsewhere in Central Mindanao not to panic if they saw helicopter gunships and fighter planes of the Philippine Air Force hovering around the region. The display of combat aircraft before and after the Independence Day celebration on June 12 "was something not to worry about," said Col. Franklin del Prado, Army spokesperson of the 6th Infantry Division based at Camp Gen. Siongco in Datu Odin Sinsuat, Maguindanao. Many residents had expressed apprehension that a massive military operation could be taking place like what they experienced at the height of the Moro rebellion in the 1970s and the "all-out war" launched by the Estrada administration against the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in 2000. The helicopters and fighter jets were on "maintenance flights" to check them for "airworthiness," Del Prado said. *Charlie Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Co-op worker killed in attack

COTABATO CITY—A person was killed while another was wounded when unidentified men ambushed a vehicle of the Maguindanao Electric Cooperative (Magelco) on Tuesday. Col. Franklin del Prado, 6th Infantry Division spokesperson, said Elson Paguital, 41, died at a government hospital in nearby Shariff Aguak town in Maguindanao. Wounded was Datu Mamadra, 39. Paguital and Mamadra, both Magelco collectors, were on board a company vehicle when they were attacked in Barangay Iginagampong in Datu Unsay town. Del Prado said the attackers were in a vehicle and used assault rifles. Del Prado said the motive for the attack could be work-related or personal grudge. *Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Slapping triggers gunfight

KORONADAL CITY—The slapping of a boy caught harvesting pineapple from an American-owned plantation in Tupi, South Cotabato triggered a 15-minute gunfight between soldiers and armed men believed to be Moro rebels. The Army's 6th Infantry Division said it was investigating Saturday's clash while the Malaysian-led international monitoring team was conducting its own independent investigation. Reports said a 14-year old boy from Barangay Sumbakil in Tupi was caught taking pineapple from the vast Dole plantation. He was allegedly slapped and manhandled by a certain Sergeant Ulalisan of the Army's 57th Infantry Battalion for picking pineapples. The boy's relatives returned and attacked the Army detachment, triggering a 15-minute exchange of gunfire, the Army said. *Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Taxpayer to open city office

COTABATO CITY—City officials announced that instead of a VIP, a taxpayer would be given the honor of cutting the ceremonial ribbon for the opening of the new City Hall on June 20 as the city celebrates its 57th anniversary. Mayor Muslimin Sema admitted that at first, they had wanted President Macapagal-Arroyo to grace the occasion and cut the ceremonial ribbon but she could not make it because of a hectic schedule. Ms Arroyo was scheduled to meet Pope Benedict XVI this month. A city official, who asked not to be named, said it was also expensive to host a presidential visit, considering days of security coordination, preparation and accommodation of security personnel. *Nash Maulana, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

PNP pushing yacon as alternative to marijuana

KAPANGAN, BENGUET—THE Philippine National Police intends to make the root crop yacon an alternative crop for marijuana plantations in the Cordillera if its farming here would be successful.

Senior Supt. Rodrigo Licudine, Cordillera police deputy director for operations, said the police were closely watching how the first batch of yacon farmers would fare in terms of production and income.

"If the farmers will find yacon a good crop, we will recommend the plant's cultivation in other marijuana producing areas," he said.

The thrust is the PNP's way of showing its determination to help eradicate the remaining marijuana plantations in the region, Licudine said.

"That's why encouraging marijuana farmers to shift to yacon had become part of our regular law enforcement duties," he said.

Licudine recently led a team from the regional police and the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency in inspecting several yacon plantations here.

Mayor Rogelio Leon said the PNP's goal of making yacon an alternative crop in other provinces depended on the 50 farmers in his town who received 300 yacon seedlings each from the PNP in February.

The farmers, some of whom are suspected marijuana farmers according to Licudine, were chosen to pilot yacon farming for commercial purposes.

The seedlings came from the Department of Agriculture, which recognized the business prospects and medicinal potentials of the crop.

Leon said the municipal agriculture office received good feedback from farmers who claimed that yacon was easy to raise and promised a bountiful harvest.

But he said the police and town officials had yet to see the plantation yields. Harvest time is between August and September.

Supt. Oliver Enmodias, PDEA regional director, said his agency would support the campaign to make yacon an alternative to marijuana.

"We will still apply the force of the law against marijuana dealers but we will welcome marijuana farmers who will embrace yacon as their main product," he said.

Aranito Pinas, a farmer, said they found yacon convenient to grow because it did not require commercial fertilizer. He said his 200-sqm yacon farm in Sitio Bolinsak in Barangay Paykek s growing fine on chicken dung.

By August, he expects to earn between P70 and P90 per kilogram of yacon.

Licudine said that if the yacon farming here was successful, the regional command would recommend yacon to farmers tilling marijuana in the remote areas of Tinoc in Ifugao, Tinglayan in Kalinga, and Bakun and the boundary areas of Buguias in Benguet. *Delmar Cariño, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

ANTIPOVERTY CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

At least 400 poor families in a resettlement area in Sitio Lupang in Barangay Sta. Cruz, Sta. Rosa, Laguna will benefit from urban agriculture projects like planting of assorted vegetable seeds and backyard chicken raising. Dennis Araullo, regional agriculture director, discusses the program with the residents.

NBI probes job scam in Negros Occidental

BACOLOD CITY—THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation here is investigating complaints of large-scale illegal recruitment that has victimized more than 50 Negrenses who paid P15,000 each to land jobs in Bahrain.

NBI-Bacolod chief Philip Pecache said 22 of the victims went to his office to file a complaint against a certain Merlyn Estares, who recruited them for jobs in hotels and hospitals in Bahrain.

They alleged that Estares collected P15,000 each from them as "bond" and promised to return the amount when they started working in Bahrain.

But Estares told RGMA Super Radyo that she did not have the money paid to her by the recruits because she had sent it through Western Union to Rachel Sevilla, a stewardess from Cebu who was facilitating the jobs for them.

Pecache said Sevilla was negotiating for the jobs with a certain Mr. Mohammad.

Complainants

The complainants, who asked the INQUIRER not to be identified, said they never met Sevilla or Mohammad because they only dealt with Estares, who told them about the two.

They said Estares offered jobs for nurses, hospital technicians and hotel employees.

Since they paid the "bonds" late last year, they said all they got from Estares were promises that they would soon be able to go to Bahrain.

Pecache said 22 of the alleged victims had already submitted affidavits to the NBI.

He urged the 28 others to come out and file similar complaints in preparation for the filing of large scale illegal recruitment and estafa charges against those behind the scam. *Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

NEWS

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ALANAH TORRALBA/CONTRIBUTOR

DEER PARK: About 4,000 deer from Australia roam a farm located at the foot of Mt. Isarog in Camarines Sur, which is turning into a popular attraction. Visitors are welcome and allowed to pet and feed the animals.

Chronicler says Abenojar first on Everest summit

By Alcuin Papa

EMINENT MT. EVEREST CHRONICLER ELIZABETH Hawley said the other day maverick Filipino climber Dale Abenojar summited the world's highest mountain on May 15, two days before the heretofore first Filipino to reach the peak, Leo Oracion.

In a long distance telephone interview with the INQUIRER, Hawley said she interviewed Abenojar at his request for one hour on June 6 and was shown two summit photos.

"I met him myself. I interviewed him at his request. I believe he reached the summit. I believe him. It has been disputed, but he has photos and I have copies (of the photos)," the 83-year-old Hawley said.

One of the photos, Hawley said, clearly showed Mt. Makalu in the background. "Makalu is not visible anywhere below 8,500 feet on the north side."

She said Abenojar made it to the summit together with Tsiring Jangbu Sherpa.

Canadian saw him

Hawley also said a Canadian climber visited her and saw the photos Abenojar had given her. The Canadian, who didn't actually summit, told her he had seen someone wearing the same clothes as Abenojar climbing the north face of Everest.

Hawley, a former journalist, traveled to Nepal 40 years ago and never left. While she has never climbed a mountain in her life, Hawley is the best known chronicler of Himalayan expeditions for over four decades. She is respected by the international mountaineering community because of her complete and accurate records, despite their being unofficial.

Climbers who want to be recognized for climbing Everest subject themselves to interviews with Hawley or her staff.

During the interviews, every aspect and detail of the mountaineer's Everest climb is discussed, including what and who they saw on the mountain. Hawley is able to verify a climb by interviewing other climbers.

Hawley told the INQUIRER she remembered Abenojar, whom she called "Mr. Dale," very well.

"He was very talkative. He just wouldn't shut up. The guy who was with him tried to shut him up," Hawley recalled.

No comment

She said, however, she could not comment on the authenticity of the certification issued to Abenojar by the Tibet Mountaineering Association.

Hawley explained there had been cases where climbers claimed to have summited Everest but these were disproved years later. "I wouldn't say that is common. But that is certainly not uncommon."

She said climbers without previous experience scaling alpine mountains have been known to summit Everest.

Controversy has surrounded Abenojar's claim of having scaled Everest from the tougher North side. Skeptics in the mountaineering community said he did not have the alpine-mountain climbing experience and his history of mountaineering in the Philippines was checkered with "fabrications."

At one point in the past, Abenojar's detractors said he had claimed to have climbed every mountain in the Philippines.

Abenojar also claimed to have climbed Mt. Halcon in Mindoro, one of the country's more difficult peaks. This claim was later to have been found to be false by mountaineers in the area.

Oracion reacts

Oracion, the acknowledged first Filipino on Mt. Everest, received the news in stride.

"He can claim whatever he wants to claim. *Diyos na bahala sa kanya*. It's up to him to prove it," Oracion told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

"*Basta kami*, we delivered the message *na kaya ng Pinoy*," Oracion said.

SORENTO

AS LOW AS P14,853 /MO.

K2700

AS LOW AS P8,996 /MO. OR P114,750 D/P

picanto

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Telefax: 817-8421

MANDALUYONG
79 EDSA Mandaluyong City
Tels.: 531-4631 to 33; 531-1949; 531-4424
Fax: 531-4380

LAS PIÑAS
(In Front of SM Southmall)
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SUBJECT TO BANK APPROVAL

Text us your feedback: Inquirer met name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart) E-mail: pr_metro@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Ester G. Dipasupil

A plus METRO

A SHARP curve and a distracting billboard ad makes this part of C-5 Road in Makati City an accident prone area. ERNIE SARMIENTO

WHAT'S INSIDE

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■ Pasig slay victim's family continues to live in fear /A18

■ NPD operatives undergo anti-terrorism training program /A18

'Dismantle or transfer billboards'

DPWH team to track down 'unsafe' signs

By Leila B. Salaverria and Tina G. Santos

OWNERS OF BILLBOARDS AND ADVERTISING SIGNS DISPLAYED alongside major thoroughfares nationwide should be ready to take down these structures or relocate them anytime soon for the public's safety.

Secretary Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. of the Department of Public Works and Highways yesterday said the memorandum circular prohibiting the putting up of billboards within a 100-meter radius from the center of national roads could be released today.

The circular, issued by the department's National Building Code Development Office, was still being reviewed yesterday by the DPWH's legal department. "I hope to come up with an official circular tomorrow. Nevertheless, we have to make this announcement to give notice to those concerned that we will be taking action," Ebdane said. He added that he has ordered his regional directors to immediately implement the circular upon its release.

NBCDO chief Emmanuel Cuntapay said earlier that billboards could distract motorists and cause road accidents. They could also collapse and kill or injure people as well as destroy property.

DPWH teams will also be conducting technical inspections to determine which billboards or advertising structures are unsafe and need to be dismantled immediately.

Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, meanwhile, said the city government was drafting an ordinance that would regulate the display of billboards and other signs in the city. The mayor said they would also enforce a uniform size for all billboards in the city.

"The allowable size limit for billboards would only be 12 x 24 feet," said Atienza, who added that he would also propose new rates for billboard displays.

Manila cops give list of safety tips to studes

By Margaux C. Ortiz

NEVER USE YOUR CELLULAR PHONE IN PUBLIC PLACES. STAY OUT of dark alleys. Call 117 during an emergency.

These were some of the safety tips contained in reading materials which Manila police have been giving out to students in the city so that they would know how to protect themselves from criminals.

Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong, Manila Police District director, said his men have been distributing pamphlets and leaflets titled "Crime Safety Tips" to students since Monday, when classes resumed on all levels.

According to Bulaong, cell phone robbery and theft remained the most common complaint among students. To avoid becoming a victim, Bulaong said that "young people should refrain from using cell phones in public places or public utility vehicles such as jeepneys and FX megataxis."

The pamphlet also said that parents should tell their children where they could go in case of emergencies. "An example of this would be a trusted neighbor's house," Bulaong said.

Children should also avoid dark alleys, wooded areas, overgrown shrubbery, vacant buildings and construction sites, according to the MPD pamphlet.

"Young students should take the safest routes to and from their schools, stores and friends' houses," Bulaong said, adding that children should always take the same route when going home from school.

Apart from making sure that their children know their full name, address and telephone number, parents should also teach their children to call 117 during emergencies. "Teach children to go to a clerk, security guard or police officer for help if they get lost in a mall, store or street," the MPD chief said.

Bulaong had recently directed all his station commanders to reproduce the pamphlets and distribute them to students on the first day of classes. He also reminded students to text MPD <space> message and send it to 700 PIT (700748) for immediate police action.

Novellino

The only way to enjoy wine this Father's Day.

Let the world's greatest Dad feel like a king with Novellino wines. Bold, refreshing flavors. Rich, sparkling textures. Father's Day has never tasted so good.

Police deny abduction stories in Muntinlupa

CAINTA ROAD IMPROVEMENT
Amang Rodriguez Ave., which serves as the best alternate route to Metro Manila via the Manggahan Floodway from the town of Cainta, is now a brand new all-concrete road, with an improved drainage system. Impassable for years because of potholes and perennial flooding, the road improvement is one of the priority projects of Cainta Mayor Mon Ilagan. Work on phases 2 and 3 of this one-kilometer stretch will soon start utilizing funds from the Office of Rizal Gov. Casimiro Ynares and Rep.Michael John Duavit.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THREE ALLEGED CASES OF KIDNAPPING and rape in Alabang, Muntinlupa being spread by e-mail on the Internet have turned out to be false.

The police, however, confirmed that a woman had reported that she was abducted by a group of men who took her cash and valuables. She added, however, that the robbers did not rape her.

Supt. Jose Mario Espino, acting Muntinlupa police chief, informed Mayor Jaime Fresnedi that they conducted an investigation and found out that no such incidents occurred.

According to the e-mail, a copy of which was sent to the INQUIRER, three women were reportedly abducted between May 16 and 26 in Alabang.

In all three incidents, the perpetrators loaded their victim onto a Mercedes Benz van, forced her to drink alcohol and then raped her. Afterward, according to the e-mail, the suspects dumped their victim somewhere in the area.

The first incident allegedly occurred at the Alabang Town Center where the victim, who was not identified, was waiting for a passenger jeepney.

The e-mail claimed that another woman was abducted at the Metropolis Mall.

The third incident, on the other hand, said that another victim was kidnapped at 9:40 p.m. on May 26 as she was walking on Wilcon, Alabang-Zapote Road. She was later dropped off by the alleged perpetrators at around 3 a.m. on Indochina Street, near the Asian Hospital in Filinvest, Alabang.

The e-mail said: "You have been warned. Forward this e-mail especially to those who are working in call centers located at North Cybergate, Filinvest Alabang."

The Muntinlupa police, which investigated the supposed incidents, said that the reports on the abductions were false.

However, Insp. Bunny Martinez, officer-in-charge of the Alabang sub-station, confirmed that a 21-year-old woman who works at the APAC Customer Service Center had reported that she was kidnapped by five men on May 27.

The woman said she was walking on Northgate, Alabang-Zapote at around 3:40 a.m. when a Toyota Hi-Ace van stopped beside her.

Several men then forcibly loaded her into the van. There were five men in all, she told the police.

Inside the van, the victim said the men forced her to drink a bottle of beer but she refused.

One of them touched her private parts before taking her bag which contained her cellular phone, wallet and ID cards, she said. The men then dropped her off at the Rizal Village, Western Service Road in Alabang.

However, the victim did not pursue the case against the still unidentified suspects, Martinez added.

Although the police called the e-mail circulating over the Internet as a "fabrication to create chaos in the area," they said that they have stepped up security measures in commercial establishments and call centers in Alabang.

All mobile patrols and intelligence operatives were also ordered to be on the lookout for suspicious-looking vehicles roaming in the area at nighttime, Espino added.

UN awardee leads 2006 UPAA awardees

DR. MERCEDES CONCEPCION (BS Chem '51), the country's leading demographer and U.N. Population Awardee in 2005, has been chosen as the U.P. Alumni Association's (UPAA) Most Distinguished Alumna for 2006.

Prof. Antonio Mabesa (BSA '56) and Dr. Nelia Cortes-Maramba (ND '60), on the other hand, will be the recipients of the Lifetime Distinguished Achievement Awards.

Top professionals

The Outstanding Professional Awardees in the different fields are: Dr. Arsenio Resurreccion (BSAE '71; MS '78), agriculture; Percy Arañador (BS '81), arts and letters; Victor Valdepeñas (BSF '66); MA (Eco) '69), business administration; Dr. Lina Diaz-de Rivera (MAT '76; PhD '91), education;

Dr. Ernesto Sonido (BSEM '50), geology; lawyer Andres Gatmaitan (SBSJ '61; LLB '61), law; Dr. Alberto Romualdez, Jr. (MD '65), medicine; Dr. Carmencita Matias-Abaquin (GN '62; BSN '69; MN '75; PhD '00), nursing; Gov. Salvacion Zaldivar-Perez (AB '56; BSFS '58), public administration; and Dr. Nina Barzaga (BSPH '75; MD '79), public health.

The Community Service Awardees are engineer Francis Chua aka Biao Ang (BSIE '72) for the national level and lawyer Romeo Gerochi (BS '71) for the Visayas.

The UPAA Service Awardee is Olivia Rocha-Aliga (BM '74) while the recipient of the UPAA Presidential Award is Amb. Lauro Baja Jr.

Outstanding graduates

This year's outstanding graduates are Donald Ngwe, BS (Eco) '06 summa cum laude and Cherrys Abrigo, BS ChE '06 magna cum laude. The Outstanding Alumni Chapter Awardee is the UP Food Technologists Alumni Association, Inc.

U.P. President Emerlinda Roman will host a dinner in honor of this year's awardees at the U.P. Executive House on June 16.

The awards will be given out during the U.P. General Alumni-Faculty Homecoming and Reunion at the Ang Bahay ng Alumni on June 24.

NPD operatives undergo antiterror training program

By Nancy C. Carvajal

THE NORTHERN POLICE DISTRICT has created its own counter-terrorism unit which would deal with such incidents in addition to hostage-taking, kidnappings and bank robberies.

"We want to be prepared and equipped to neutralize terrorists who operate in our area," Supt. Rafael Santiago the NPD operations head, said.

Santiago said the formation of the counter-terrorism unit was spearheaded by NPD director, Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil.

He added that although the creation of the unit had been proposed before the recent bombings in the metropolis, "it's creation is timely and necessary to improve police capability, otherwise problems could occur in some situations."

He said the counter terrorist unit was composed of 50 junior officers who are undergoing a 45-day Urban Counter Revolutionary Warfare Course.

The officers come from special units like the Special Weapons and Tactics Team, Special Operations Group, the Mobile Force and the investigation and intelligence group.

"The select group would make up the core group of the NPD elite, ready for deployment in any emergency," Santiago said.

He said the counter terrorist unit would undergo 360 hours of training in various areas, such as how to plan and execute a counter terrorist operation, successfully resolve a hostage-taking situation or bank robbery and provide protection to dignitaries.

In addition, they would also be taught how to improve their skills in intelligence gathering, memory training, target analysis and investigative ability.

"They are supposed to be already good in their area of expertise but we expect them to be better and well-rounded operatives after the program," Santiago said.

The select group, he said, would also undergo firearms training which includes close quarters shooting to enable them to respond correctly in crisis situations inside buildings, houses and establishments.

Two police facilities were recently bombed in the metropolis -- a police bus being used as a satellite precinct in Philcoa, Quezon City and a SWAT van parked inside Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig City.

Probers are trying to determine who were behind the attacks. A group calling itself "Taong Bayan at Kawal" claimed responsibility for the attacks. No one was killed or injured in both incidents.

The group also said it had planted an improvised explosive device in front of the Grepalife Building in Makati City.

Pasig City slay victim's family lives in fear

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THREE MONTHS AFTER BUSINESSman Leonardo Umale was gunned down as he was about to enter the Pearl Plaza Building in Pasig City, his family said they are still living in fear.

"We have not gone back to living normal lives. How can we live normally? We continue to get death threats, even our lawyers are being threatened," Umale's wife Clarissa told the Inquirer.

Clarissa was with her husband when he was shot dead by several men on March 16 in front of the family-owned building at the Ortigas Business Center.

Clarissa has accused Ilocos Sur. Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson of being behind the murder, an allegation Singson has consistently denied. The killing remains unsolved.

It would have been Umale's 59th birthday on June 30, Clarissa said.

The wife said she remains convinced that the killing had something to do with her husband's business interests as he had filed cases against "Singson's associates."

"The cases are still ongoing and we are still getting threats. This just means the killing of my husband was related to these cases," Clarissa said.

She claimed that her two sons and their police escort figured in a gun-toting incident with the police escorts of an alleged Singson associate at the Shangri-La Mall in Mandaluyong City on Monday afternoon.

Clarissa said they became suspicious when they noticed that some men in civilian clothes were taking their pictures while they were inside the mall.

The Umales said they had seen the men earlier with an associate of the Ilocos Sur governor. When one of her sons and their police escort accosted the other group, the men allegedly pulled out guns. Clarissa said that her son was unarmed.

However, a watchman in one of the stores told the Inquirer that the men in both camps were both holding guns and were aiming these at each other.

Another guard managed to pacify the two camps minutes later. Shangri-La watchmen, however, refused to confirm or deny the incident.

Clarissa said they would request from the mall a copy of the security video which captured the incident to support a complaint the family would file with the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

BEST JAIL WARDEN
Navotas Mayor Toby Tiangco (3rd from right) congratulates Chief Insp. Brendan Fulgencio, town jail warden after he was named Best Municipal Jail Warden (2005)

METROBRIEFS

Belt-tightening measure

A PROPOSED cost-cutting measure may result in smelly and dirty public markets in Quezon City. Vendors in the city's public markets may soon be lining up in front of a single faucet to fetch water for cleaning their stalls and wares and for using the toilet. A "one-faucet policy" for all public markets in Quezon City is being proposed by Manuel Neil Lina, officer-in-charge of the city's Market Development and Administration Department. According to the scheme, water needed for cleaning purposes, as well as toilet use, would be supplied by a single faucet for the entire public market. There are eight public markets in Quezon City, with one each in Murphy, Kamuning, San Jose, Frisco, Projects 2 and 4, Roxas and Galas. Lina, who also sits as assistant city administrator for fiscal affairs, made the suggestion to Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. in a recent meeting. The proposed scheme is expected to bring down water bill expenses to P300,000 from P2.2 million last year, he said in a statement. Meanwhile, rehabilitation work in the city's public markets is almost complete, according to Lina. Only the Murphy public market needs major repairs, particularly for its electrical installations and wiring, he added.

DJ Yap

Raps vs factory owner

POLICE yesterday threatened to file charges against the owners of the firecracker factory which exploded on Tuesday morning, killing a factory worker in Binangonan, Rizal. "The factory does not have a license to manufacture pyrotechnics, though the owners claim the building was just a storehouse of finished products," Senior Supt. Freddie Panen, Rizal provincial police director, told the INQUIRER. He added that based on initial investigation, the room where the firecrackers were stored also "did not have proper ventilation." According to Panen, they have talked to some of the victims who sustained minor injuries to file charges against the factory owners. "But most of them would not cooperate, especially because the owners already shouldered their hospital expenses," Panen added. The two-story concrete building on Barangay Tagpos burst into flames at around 11 a.m. the other day, triggering successive explosions. Rodelio Manamam, a factory worker, was seriously injured and died at the hospital while undergoing treatment. Manuel Diaz, one of the owners, was also injured in the incident, Panen said. Eight other persons standing outside the building were hurt by glass shards.

Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

Treated like a criminal

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

IT DOESN'T HAVE TO TAKE A ROCKET scientist to know that the latest bombing in Metro Manila, inside a police camp, was perpetrated by insiders or policemen.

The first bombing took place inside a police van that served as a police outpost in Quezon City.

Nobody was hurt in the two incidents.

The perpetrators were probably sending a message: that some members of the Philippine National Police (PNP) were also capable of destabilization.

Or, some elements in the Macapagal-Arroyo administration are probably behind the terror bombings to justify the imposition of another state of emergency.

Terrorizing the citizenry is about power. Absolute power, as you can see, is addicting. Look at Ferdinand Marcos.

* * *

An insider in the Arroyo administration is using his power to terrorize this columnist by having the police Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) conduct a surveillance operation on me.

I'm not scared since I'm neither a criminal nor a terrorist. Besides, I'm used to living dangerously.

What I want to point out is that if this guy can do this to me, a former friend but (still) a supporter of the Arroyo administration, how much more if the object of his ire was a member of the opposition or an enemy?

I'm not surprised that he got beaten up by some Filipino-Chinese men many years ago when he was not yet in power.

One night, he was reportedly drunk inside a restaurant and had a quarrel with his Chinese girlfriend. The quarrel degenerated into a shouting match with the guy allegedly insulting the entire Chinese race.

Of course, the Tsinoy male customers took offense. They waited for him outside the restaurant and ganged up on him as he was about to board his car. Now, why doesn't he go after those attackers since he appears to be so vindictive toward people who have hurt him?

I did nothing—absolutely nothing—wrong to him. I was only doing my job as a journalist by exposing the alleged smuggling activities of that woman he was having a quarrel with many years ago in that restaurant.

* * *

In my 24 years of writing this column, I can recall only two instances where I was placed under surveillance: now and during the Aquino administration.

A general in a unit of the defunct Philippine Constabulary once ordered his men to tail me, with an ambush in mind.

During Marcos' martial law regime, when I was criticizing abusive military and police personnel, I was never placed under surveillance by the police or the military.

How ironic that I'm being treated like a criminal or an enemy of the state in this administration that I've been rabidly supporting.

Incentives a 'step forward' in nuke dispute, says Iran

MADRID—IRAN'S FOREIGN MINister said Wednesday that a Western package of incentives designed to persuade Tehran to suspend uranium enrichment is a "step forward" in the nuclear dispute.

"We consider it a step forward to present this package of incentives," Manouchehr Mottaki said as he arrived at Madrid airport for talks with his Spanish counterpart. He was referring to a proposal devised by the five permanent members of the UN Security Council plus Germany that was presented to Tehran last week.

Mottaki would not specify when Tehran might make a decision on whether to accept the incentives. "We are going to review and study the proposals seriously," he told reporters.

The United States accuses Iran of seeking to develop nuclear weapons, which Tehran denies, saying its program seeks only to develop energy.

Mottaki said that, after Iran had reviewed the incentives, it would consult with Germany, Britain and France to express its views.

"Then we'll decide together how to handle the issue and follow up the matter to the finalization and solution of the problem," he said in English. Spain was not one of the countries involved in the incentives package.

Mottaki said Iran also would hold discussions with other European countries, China, Russia and nonaligned nations.

Referring to the discussions in general that Iran will hold, he said: "We think we are going to work seriously to this end to guarantee the legitimate right of our country and overcome the concerns of the other side."

The incentives include an offer to provide Iran with nuclear technology to get it to step away from enriching uranium, and would bring Washington into direct talks with Tehran.

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Hamid Reza Asefi insisted Sunday that Iran was not stalling, but would take "as long as is necessary" to study the package.

He said that while it includes "points which are acceptable," there were also "points which are ambiguous. There are points that should be strengthened, and points that we believe should not exist."

He did not elaborate, but called the offer of nuclear technology a "positive point." He added, "there are also points that are unclear, such as the uranium enrichment program."

Iran's nuclear enrichment—a process that can make nuclear fuel for a power plant or fissile material for an atomic bomb—is the central point in Tehran's tortuous negotiations with the international community.

The package of incentives no longer includes a call for an all-out elimination of enrichment, instead asking Iran to suspend such activity for the duration of any negotiations. *AP*

US envoy warns N. Korea vs missile test

SEOUL—THE US AMBASSADOR to South Korea on Wednesday warned of American countermeasures if North Korea conducts a missile test.

Alexander Vershbow's comments in a radio interview come amid reports of an impending test launch of a long-range ballistic missile by the communist North.

North Korea's missile test "would be viewed as a very serious matter and we would have to take appropriate measures in response," Vershbow said in an interview with South Korea's KBS radio, declining to say what those measures would be.

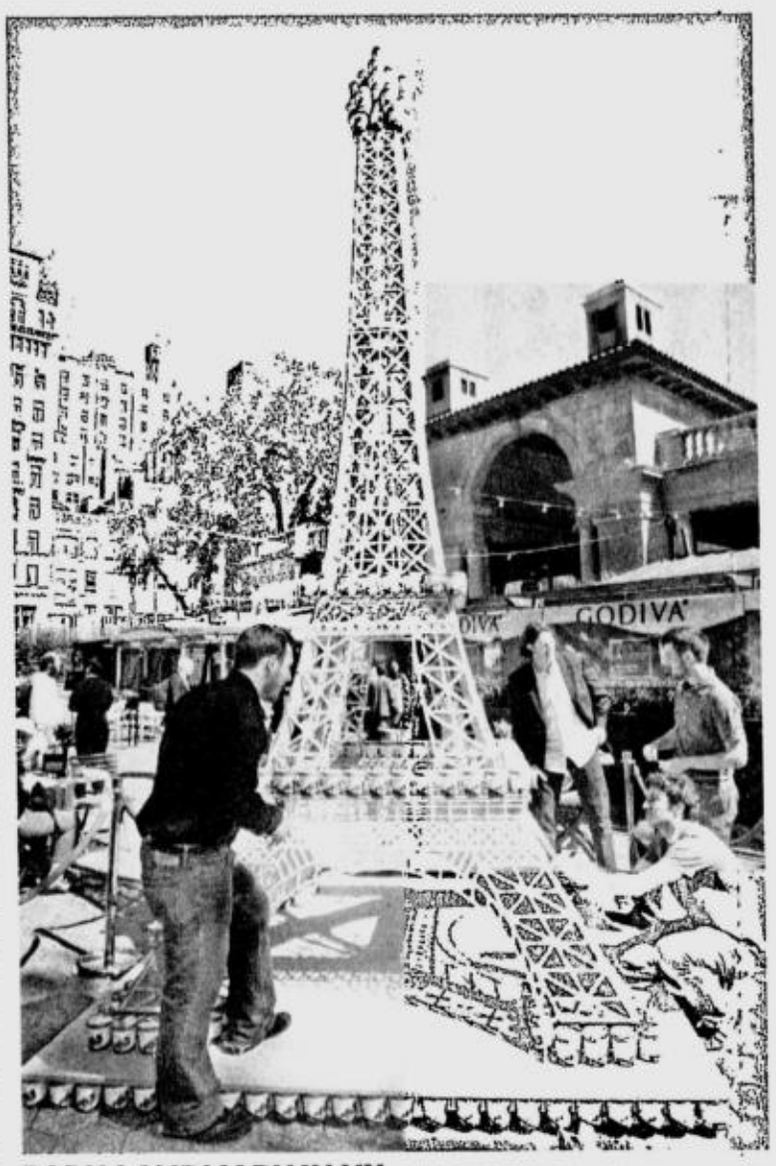
"Since it would clearly be a provocative step vis-a-vis the region and the international community, we could not simply let it pass without some response," he said.

A missile test would heighten security threats in Northeast Asia, which is already struggling to deal with the North's nuclear ambitions.

Efforts by China, Japan, Russia, South Korea and the United States to convince the North to give up its nuclear program are deadlocked and the negotiations haven't convened since November. No progress has been made on implementing a September agreement in which Pyongyang pledged to give up its nuclear program in exchange for aid and security guarantees.

"We are ready. We are ready to return without preconditions ... if North Korea is ready to move on the path of disarmament," Vershbow said Wednesday. "But until North Korea comes back to the table, the great opportunity that was created by the September agreement cannot be fulfilled."

In Washington, South Korea's Ambassador Lee Tae-sik said the prospect of a North Korean missile test was "very worrisome." *AP*



PARIS LANDMARK IN NY
A team of students from Pratt Institute School of Architecture put the finishing touches on a 16-foot model of the Eiffel Tower made of wooden sticks from ice cream bars in New York City's Luna Park in Union Square, June 13. REUTERS

New home-grown terror cells emerging in US

WASHINGTON—US INTELLIgence and law enforcement authorities are discovering new home-grown cells of Islamist radicals in the United States that draw inspiration and moral support from al-Qaida, officials said on Tuesday.

Like local terrorism cells that have recently come to light in Canada and Europe, officials said the groups are comprised of disaffected young men in their teens and 20s who rely on the Internet to try to organize and plan potential attacks on the US homeland.

Concern about attacks inside the United States gathered pace after the arrest earlier this month in Canada of 17 men—all Canadian citizens or residents—accused of planning al-Qaida-inspired attacks across densely populated southern Ontario.

Scott Redd, director of the National Counterterrorism Center, said in a written statement to the Senate that the emergence of home-grown terrorist groups is posing "real challenges" for US authorities despite law enforcement successes at disrupting potential attacks.

"We are grappling with a whole new set of questions: What forces give rise to this violent ideology in immigrant communities that may appear otherwise to be quite well assimilated? ... What signs should we be looking for to try to draw early warning of potential problems?" the statement said. *Reuters*

WORLDBRIEFS

50 killed in India truck mishap

LUCKNOW, India—The death toll from a truck accident in the tiny northern Indian state of Uttaranchal rose to 50 on Wednesday following the deaths of another 10 people in hospital, officials said. The truck carrying wedding guests fell into a gorge Tuesday when its driver lost control while negotiating a sharp curve in the hilly district of Almorah, some 350 km from the city of Lucknow, police said. "Ten more people died in hospital overnight," district official Ruchi Tiwari told AFP by phone from Almorah. Forty people died on the spot and police were still recovering the bodies. *AFP*

UN to probe East Timor violence

UNITED NATIONS—United Nations chief Kofi Annan on Tuesday asked UN human rights chief Louise Arbour to help set up an independent inquiry commission to probe a recent wave of ethnic violence in East Timor. Annan informed the UN Security Council of his move after receiving a letter from East Timor's Foreign Minister Jose Ramos-Horta calling for such a commission to review violent incidents that began in late April and have thrown the fledgling country into crisis. Last week, UN special representative to East Timor Sukehiro Hasegawa said the country's embattled Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri would accept a UN investigation into the causes of the violence. *AFP*

42 injured in Sri Lanka train collision

COLOMBO—Two trains collided in southern Sri Lanka, leaving at least 42 passengers injured, police and hospital officials said. The accident occurred Tuesday at a railroad station in Kalutara, a town about 40 km south of the capital, Colombo, said police spokesperson Rienzie Perera. Perera said a passenger train had crashed into back of another commuter train halted at the station during busy office hours. Forty-two passengers, many with minor injuries, were taken to the region's main government hospital. Transport Minister A.H.M. Fowzie said Wednesday that he had ordered an inquiry into the crash and added that train service has resumed. *AP*

Abbas hits Israel for 'state terrorism'

GAZA CITY—PALESTINIAN President Mahmoud Abbas accused Israel Tuesday of engaging in state terrorism after nine civilians were among 11 people killed in an air strike on the Gaza Strip.

The raid, the deadliest since the Islamists of Hamas won elections in January, turned the focus back on the conflict with Israel after a bout of factional violence, which saw the parliament and Cabinet offices set ablaze.

Although two of the victims were confirmed as members of the hardline Islamic Jihad movement, the other nine were believed to be civilians. They included two young brothers, aged four and eight, and their father.

Around 42 other people, including six children, were wounded in the raid on the main north-south road in the narrow coastal territory.

A military spokesperson confirmed the involvement of its aircraft in the first explosion. He said they had hit a car carrying militants who were preparing to fire Katyusha-style rockets which have a much longer range than the usual makeshift missiles fired by the Palestinian factions.

A local leader of Jihad, Khaled al-Batsh, told AFP three of the movement's followers had been in the vehicle that was targeted.

Two of them were killed when two missiles slammed into the vehicle. The other casualties were caused by a third missile, which was fired a short time afterward while a group of civilians had gathered at the scene. *AFP*

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Iraq launches security crackdown

More checkpoints set up, 40,000 troops deployed

BAGHDAD—THOUSANDS OF Iraqi and US troops descended on the streets of Baghdad Wednesday as the authorities imposed a security clampdown as part of Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki's plan to thwart insurgent attacks.

The crackdown comes after al-Qaida warned of massive attacks to avenge last week's death of its leader Abu Musab al-Zarqawi in a US air raid and also a day after an unannounced visit by US President George W. Bush to Baghdad.

Iraqis in Baghdad were forced to double their commute time as new checkpoints mushroomed after the defense ministry announced that some 40,000 security forces, both Iraqi and coalition, would secure the city in Operation Forward Together.

Baghdad province is home to seven million people, a quarter of the country's population, and is one of the most unstable areas in the country.

There were traffic jams throughout the city as commuters waited in long lines in front of checkpoints that stopped most cars instead of waving people through as before.

The ministry did not specify how long the new security measures would be in place and the prime minister publicly asked for patience.

Checkpoints were being manned by different branches of the security services, with some handled by the police, some by the commandos or national police and others the Iraqi army.

US forces are also involved, mostly in a support role, providing air cover and roving patrols.

"We are supporting Iraqi security forces in this security plan and we are carrying out operations in the capital," said coalition forces spokesperson Maj. William Wilhoite, who declined to comment on how many US troops were involved.

Officers at the checkpoints were stopping drivers and checking their cars, registration documents and identity papers.

Single male drivers received special attention especially if they were driving vehicles without license plates in the BMW or Opel models favored by insurgents. *AFP*

US PRESIDENT George W. Bush greets military personnel and embassy employees at the US Embassy after he arrived in Baghdad for a surprise visit to the city June 13. REUTERS

US image worsening, says survey

WASHINGTON—As the war in Iraq continues for a fourth year, the global image of America has slipped further, even among people in some countries closely allied with the United States, a new opinion poll has found.

Favorable views of the United States dropped sharply over the past year in Spain, where only 23 percent say they have a positive opinion, down from 41 percent last year, according to the survey, which was done in 15 nations, including the United States, this spring by the Washington-based Pew Research Center.

Other countries where positive views dropped significantly include India (56 percent, down from 71 percent); Russia (43 percent, down from 52 percent), and Indonesia (30 percent, down from 38 percent). In Turkey, only 12 percent said they held a favorable opinion, down from 23 percent last year.

Declines were less steep in France, Germany and Jordan, while people in China and Pakistan had a slightly more favorable image of the United States this year than last. In Britain, Washington's closest ally in the Iraq war, positive views of America have remained in the mid-50-percent range in the past two years, down sharply from 75 percent in 2002, before the war.

Support for the fight against terrorism led by the United States is also down, Pew found.

Although strong majorities in several countries expressed worries about Iran's nuclear intentions, in 13 of 15 countries polled, most people said the war in Iraq posed more of a danger to world peace. Russians held that view by a 2-to-1 margin.

"Obviously, when you get many more people saying that the US presence in Iraq is a threat to world peace as say that about Iran, it's a measure of how much Iraq is sapping good will to the United States," said Andrew Kohut, president of the Pew Research Center.

The latest declines came after a year in which anti-American sentiment had slightly receded, aided by good feeling over aid for tsunami victims and political progress in Iraq.

New York Times News Service

New Iraq al-Qaida leader vows vengeance

DUBAI—AL QAIDA'S NEW LEADER IN Iraq vowed on Tuesday to avenge the killing of his predecessor Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, saying Americans and their Iraqi allies would not be safe in their strongholds, a Web statement said.

"The day of vengeance is near and your strong towers in the Green Zone will not protect you," said the statement posted on a website often used by Islamist militants and signed by the new leader Abu Hamza al-Muhajir.

The Green Zone in Baghdad is a heavily fortified compound in Baghdad which houses the headquarters of the Iraqi government, foreign embassies and a US military base.

The appearance of the Web statement coincided with a surprise visit to Baghdad on Tuesday by US President George W. Bush to try to bolster the Iraqi government days after Zarqawi was killed in a US air strike.

The authenticity of the statement could not be verified. It would be Muhajir's first public statement since being named the new leader of al-Qaida in Iraq.

"Coming battles will reveal the falseness of your power and the cowardliness of your soldiers," Muhajir said. "Do not rejoice that you killed (Zarqawi), he has left behind lions that ... trained under him.

"You will see what we have in store for you because of your betrayal and apostasy. Our swords are poised above your necks," he told Iraqis who cooperate with US-led forces.

On Monday, the group named the little-known Muhajir to be Zarqawi's successor.

A US counterterrorism official who spoke on condition of anonymity said the latest threat came as no surprise.

"It's in large part propaganda but no one's being dismissive of it. One of the things they're trying to demonstrate is that they will continue the jihad and that they're still a force to be reckoned with," he said. *Reuters*

Huge fraud uncovered in wake of hurricanes

WASHINGTON—AS MUCH AS $1.4 billion in government disaster aid to victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita—nearly a quarter of the total—went to bogus or undeserving victims, a new congressional investigation concluded.

It is a scale of abuse that Rep. Michael McCaul, R-Texas and chairman of the House subcommittee leading the inquiry, said far exceeded even his worst fears, despite months of accumulating evidence that the fraud-prevention system at the Federal Emergency Management Agency was woefully inadequate.

The improper or fraudulent payments went to a dizzying array of con artists or other undeserving recipients, according to the analysis by the Government Accountability Office, which is set to announce its findings at a hearing on Wednesday.

Emergency aid was used to pay for football tickets, the bill at a Hooters restaurant in San Antonio, Texas, a $200 bottle of Dom Perignon, "Girls Gone Wild" videos, even an all-inclusive weeklong Caribbean vacation, the report says. More than $5 million went to people who had provided cemeteries or post office boxes as the addresses of their damaged property.

FEMA also provided cash or housing assistance to more than 1,000 prison inmates, totaling millions of dollars; one inmate used a post office box to collect $20,000. Some of the inmates may in fact have owned property that was damaged, but most should not have been eligible for the aid.

In another case, 24 payments, totaling $109,708, were sent to a single apartment, where eight people each submitted requests for aid eight times, each time using their own Social Security numbers.

Another person collected 26 payments using 13 different Social Security numbers—a total of $139,000—even though public records show the individual did not live at any of the addresses reported as damaged.

Aaron T. Walker, a FEMA spokesperson, said the agency was moving to correct management weaknesses that might have contributed to the fraud.

Investigators concluded that fraudulent or improper payments probably ranged from $400 million to $1.4 billion, leading them to settle on $1 billion as their most likely estimate, representing about 16 percent of the distributed aid. *New York Times News Service*

HEADLESS BEAUTY
This undated image shows a Roman marble statue of Venus that was purchased by the Michael C. Carlos Museum of Emory University at a Sotheby's auction Tuesday, June 6, in New York for just under $1 million. AP

Indonesia frees radical cleric linked to bombings

JAKARTA—A RADICAL ISLAMIC CLERIC, whom the Bush administration has portrayed as an important operative for al-Qaida in Southeast Asia, walked out of prison on Wednesday morning, after serving just over a year for criminal conspiracy, his lawyers and Indonesian officials said Tuesday.

US officials, who had long pressed Indonesia to prosecute the cleric, Abu Bakar Bashir, expressed disappointment over the release, as did officials in Australia.

The release is likely to raise questions about Indonesia's commitment to combating terrorism, even though the government has prosecuted and imposed harsh sentences on many of the people involved in the major terrorist attacks here. Most of the military leaders of Jemaah Islamiyah, Bashir's organization, have been arrested or killed.

A spokesperson for the US Embassy in Jakarta said Tuesday that the United States was "deeply disappointed" that Bashir, 67, had been sentenced to only 30 months in prison after a court found him guilty of a "sinister conspiracy" in connection with the bombings, but acquitted him of seven terrorism charges, in March 2005. The judges said then that Bashir "knew the perpetrators," and that his words might have encouraged them.

"The possibility that a person responsible for such a terrible crime could go free after a light sentence of 30 months is cause for concern," said the spokesperson, Max Kwak.

The actual time served was reduced to just over a year, because he was given credit for previous time served and for good behavior.

US and Australian officials have contended that Bashir, the spiritual leader of Jemaah Islamiyah, had a direct role in the bombings of the Bali nightclubs in 2002, and of the bombing of the Marriott Hotel in Jakarta that killed 12 people in 2003.

In a 2003 trial he was acquitted of terrorism charges, but convicted on a passport violation. After serving that sentence, he was released, but not for long, as the United States and Australia pressured Indonesia to file the new charges. Legal observers here said the case against Bashir was weak. *New York Times News Service*

MUSLIM cleric Abu Bakar Bashir waves to supporters after his release from prison June 14. AP

Microsoft warns of 8 'critical' security flaws

SAN FRANCISCO—MICROSOFT Corp. on Tuesday warned of eight "critical" security flaws in its Windows operating system and Office software that could allow attackers to take control of a computer.

Microsoft, whose Windows operating system runs on 90 percent of the world's computers, issued patches to fix the problems as part of its monthly security bulletin. It was the biggest such update since February 2005.

The company issued a total of 12 patches that address 21 security holes and cover problems in its Windows, Internet Explorer, Word, PowerPoint and Exchange Server products, security experts said.

"The significance of this large number of patches lies in the fact that 19 of them are remote code executions," said Amol Sarwate, manager of the Vulnerability Research Lab at Qualys.

The world's biggest software maker defines a flaw as "critical" when the vulnerability could allow a damaging Internet worm to replicate without the user doing anything to the machine.

Six of the critical flaws related to Windows and two affected Office. Microsoft also issued another two security warnings it rated at its second-highest level of "important" for Windows, as well as one it gave a severity rating of "moderate."

It also warned of an "important" flaw in its Microsoft Exchange software that allows users to send and receive e-mail along with other forms of communication through computer networks.

The company has been working for more than three years to improve the security and reliability of its software as more and more malicious software targets weaknesses in Windows and other Microsoft software.

The latest patches, which are free to Microsoft software owners, can be downloaded at www.microsoft.com/security. *Reuters*

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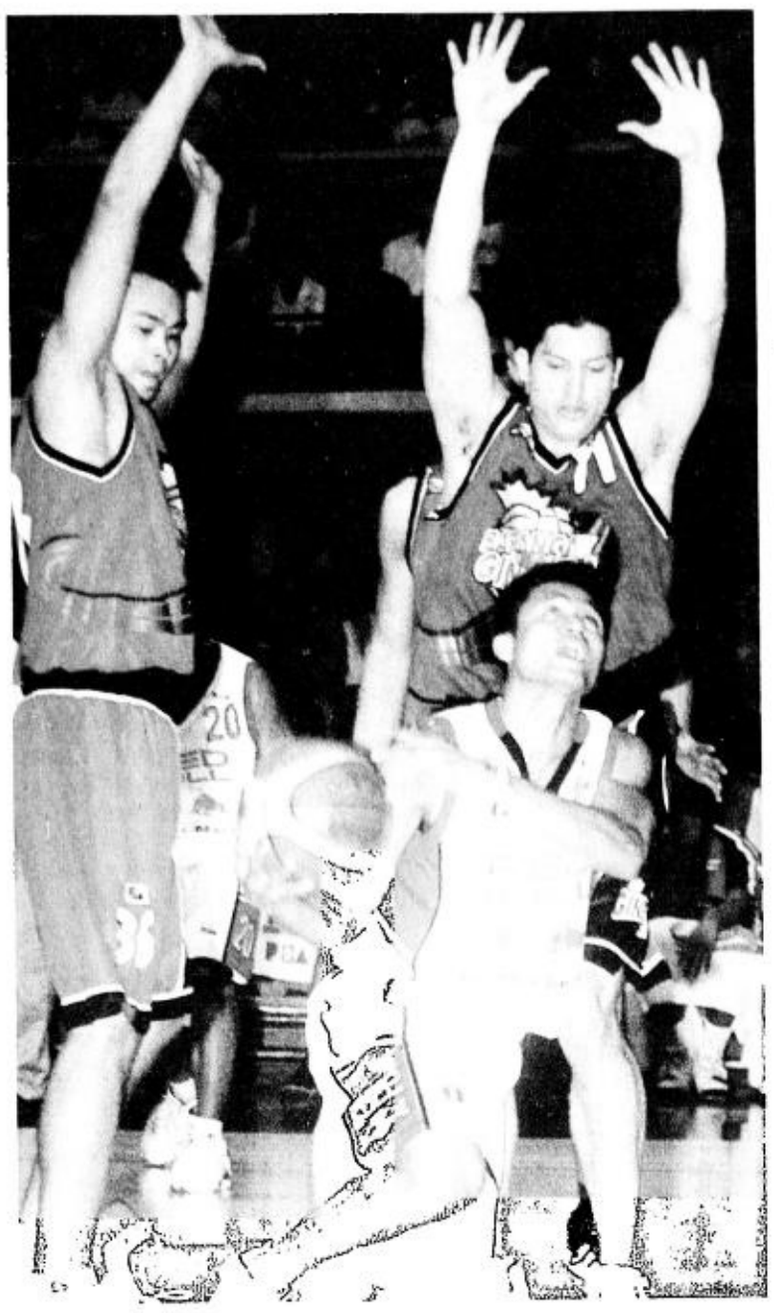
SPORTS

Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres

Text us your feedback: inquirer sprt name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)



RED BULL'S Lordy Tugade slices through the defense put up by Ginebra's Irvin Sotto (left) and Kalani Ferreria last night. ERIK ARAZAS

Aces knock out Tigers

By June Navarro

ALASKA WORKED ON ALL CYLINDERS AND DUMPED COCA-COLA, 94-69, last night to forge a semifinal playoff series with Purefoods in the PBA Philippine Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

Reynel Hugnatan relentlessly pounded the shaded lane while Jeffrey Cariaso and Willie Miller punctured the hoops without letup as they formed a potent scoring trio that set up the stage for a carnage.

Caught flatfooted by Alaska's blinding transition plays, the Tigers never got up on all fours after trailing, 25-47, at halftime and allowed the Aces to end their best-of-five quarterfinal series at 3-1 in lopsided fashion.

"Throughout the series, we have to play our best game yet," said Alaska coach Tim Cone. "We waited for a breakout game and it happened tonight."

On their first Final Four appearance after six conferences, the Aces meet the Giants in a best-of-seven semifinal affair, the only team coach Tim Cone and his wards failed to beat in the classification phase.

Despite the setback, the Tigers got out of their tailender tag the past two conferences, virtually assuring them of the No. 3 overall pick in the 2006 rookie draft in August.

Earlier, Red Bull showed up with blazing guns to rout Barangay Ginebra, 118-97.

The Bulls zoomed to a 35-19 spread at the start and never looked back to level the best-of-five series at 2-2 and force a deciding Game 5 tomorrow.

"Unlike in the past games, we didn't worry about any single guy on the floor," said Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao, referring to Ginebra's Eric Menk.

Red Bull averted a quarterfinal exit and kept its bid alive for a semifinal meeting with the San Miguel Beermen.

"We just planned to quicken the pace with a sense of urgency," he added.

But Red Bull faced the prospect of losing playmaker Celino Cruz in the decider after Cruz was slapped a technical for shouting something that referee Luisito "Boy" Cruz deemed as obscene. The penalty calls for a one-game suspension.

Second Game:

ALASKA 94—Hugnatan 16, Miller 15, Cariaso 15, Belasco 15, Thoss 9, Laure 7, Dela Cruz 6, Cortez 4, Wilson 3, Hawkins 2, Ferriols 2, Bajar 0.

COCA-COLA 69—Arigo 18, Reavis 9, Abarrientos 9, Marnaril 6, Peek 6, Singson 5, Morano 5, Wainwright 4, Antonio 4, Miranda 3, Capati 0.

Quarters: 20-11, 47-25, 76-46, 94-69.

Toyota Otis guns for clincher today

By Jasmine W. Payo

WHERE WAS JV CASIO BEFORE HE EXPLODED WITH 21 POINTS?

GAME TODAY (Olivarez Sports Center)
3 p.m.—Harbour Centre vs Toyota Otis
(Toyota Otis leads series, 2-1)

Toyota Otis coach Louie Alas admitted he let the young, streaky shooter sit on the bench longer than he should have. He apologized for his oversight in Game 3 last Tuesday and Casio brought the Sparks within a win of the PBL Unity Cup championship.

With a 2-1 lead in the best-of-five title series, the Sparks try to clinch their first ever crown in the league when they collide with the Harbour Centre Portmasters in today's Game 4 at the Olivarez Sports Center.

Gametime is set at 3 p.m. with Harbour Centre coach Jorge Gallent boldly predicting a deciding fifth game.

"The series is not yet over, there will be a Game 5," said Gallent.

Casio, tapped by Alas late in the first quarter, unloaded 21 points to cap a sizzling performance by the Toyota Otis second stringers, who outscored the Portmasters' bench, 62-16, en rout to an 83-80 victory.

He shot 5-of-6 from the three-point area, including three straight triples in a pivotal run late in the third period that kept the Sparks ahead for good.

Another sub, Ardy Larong, finished with 13 points and two blocks in only 14 minutes of action.

Although the Sparks had no problem scoring, Alas said the team must also raise their defensive game.

"It's hard to beat Harbour two in a row if they score that high," he noted. "We have to limit their production to less than 60 points for us to close the series."

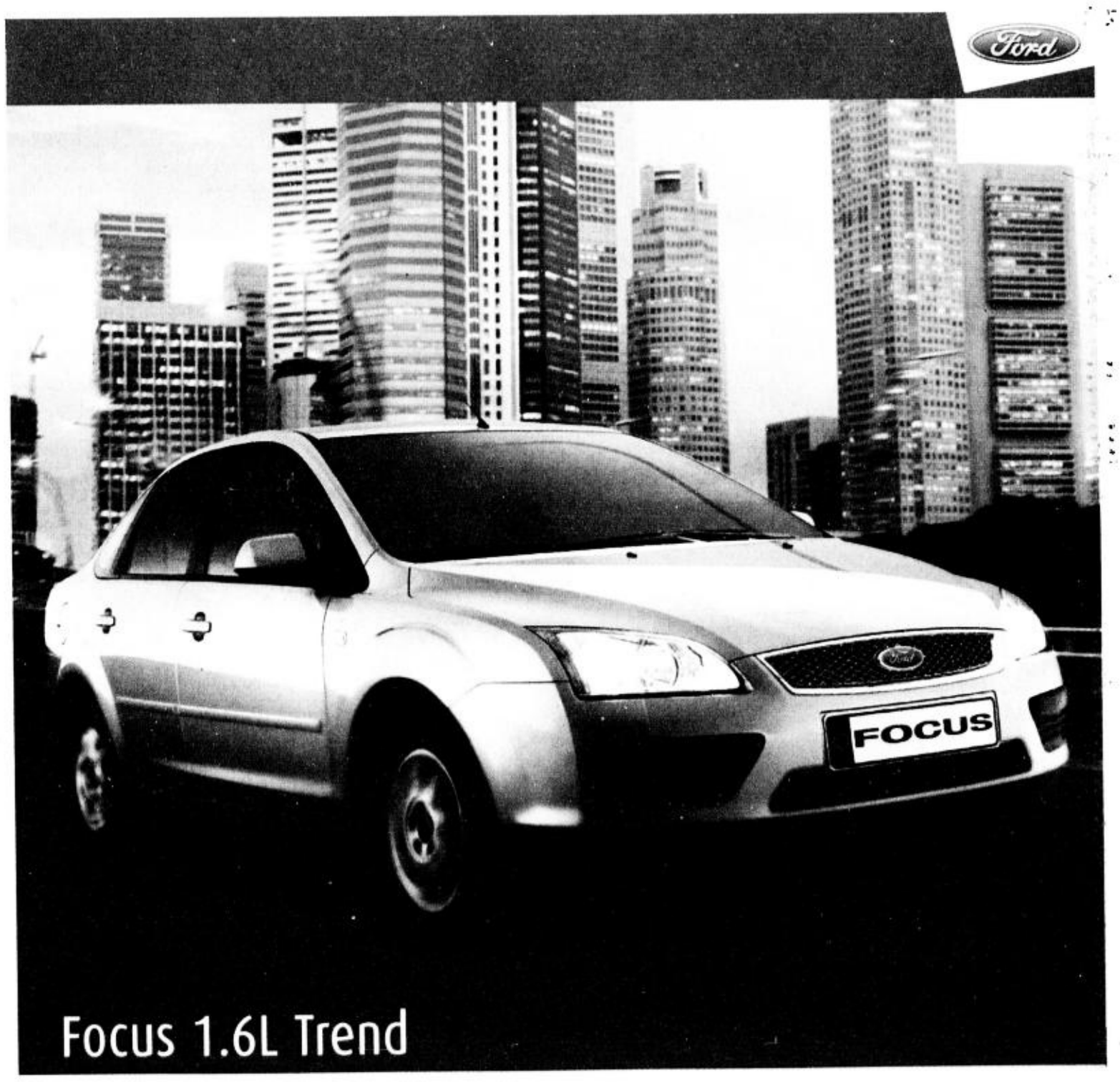
Gallent also called for a strong defensive effort from the Portmasters.

"We have to be extra careful next time," he said. "We have to beat their defense. To win Game 4, my big men will have to play solid defense."

For the second straight game, Harbour Centre's star guards found their rhythm early. Joseph Yeo fired 28 points, while LA Tenorio finished with 19.

Fil-Am center Rob Reyes, however, remains a doubtful starter after twisting his left ankle in the third quarter.

Toyota Otis claimed the series opener with a 68-51 victory, but Harbour Centre leveled the series with a 78-63 triumph in Game 2.



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FORD FOCUS

Pacman sees no weight problem

PACQUIAO

FILIPINO SUPERstar Manny Pacquiao anticipates no problem making the super featherweight limit with still close to three weeks left before he takes on Mexican star Oscar 'Chololo' Larios on July 2 at the Araneta Coliseum.

Reports coming out of the Wild Card Gym in Los Angeles indicate that Pacquiao's weight is now hovering at 134 lb, just four pounds above the super featherweight limit even if he has yet to go on a diet.

"My weight is good and my camp is really great and quiet," said Pacquiao in an online interview with fans at website Boxingtalk.

Pacquiao, whose training camp has been closed to the public by trainer Freddie Roach, said that when he is in shape, nobody can give him any trouble inside the ring, including Larios.

After Larios, the southpaw superstar said he would honor a commitment to fight Erik Morales in a rubber match, and then take care of Marco Antonio Barrera to decide once and for all who is the better fighter.

Barrera has been calling out Pacquiao lately in a bid to avenge his 11th round technical knockout loss to the Filipino in 2003.

Pacquiao, Roach and the other members of their team are expected to return to Manila Tuesday on a Philippine Airlines flight from Los Angeles.

Meanwhile, Ticketnet will start selling tickets for the Pacquiao-Larios bout today.

Prices are pegged at P30,000 (patron), P20,000 (lower box), P7,500 upper box (A), and P2,500 (upper box B). Ticketnet outlets include SM Malls in Cubao, Marilao, Quiapo, Batangas, Makati, Valenzuela, Harrison, and Molino. *Salven Lagumbay*

3 games on tap as NBC playoffs resume

GAMES TODAY *(Kidapawan)*
3 p.m.—Valencia vs North Cotabato
(C.P. Tinga gym, Taguig)
5:30 p.m.—Pangasinan vs Taguig
7:30 p.m.—Laguna vs Bacchus/Harbour

THE 2006 GUERRERO BRANDY-NBC NAtional basketball championship playoffs will resume today with three games—one in the south and two in the north—on tap.

The fifth-seeded Valencia Golden Harvest will try to follow the footsteps of giant-killer Iloilo Warriors when they face the fourth-ranked North Cotabato Braves of Gov. Manny Piñol and Mayor Efren Piñol at the Capitol gym in Amas, Kidapawan.

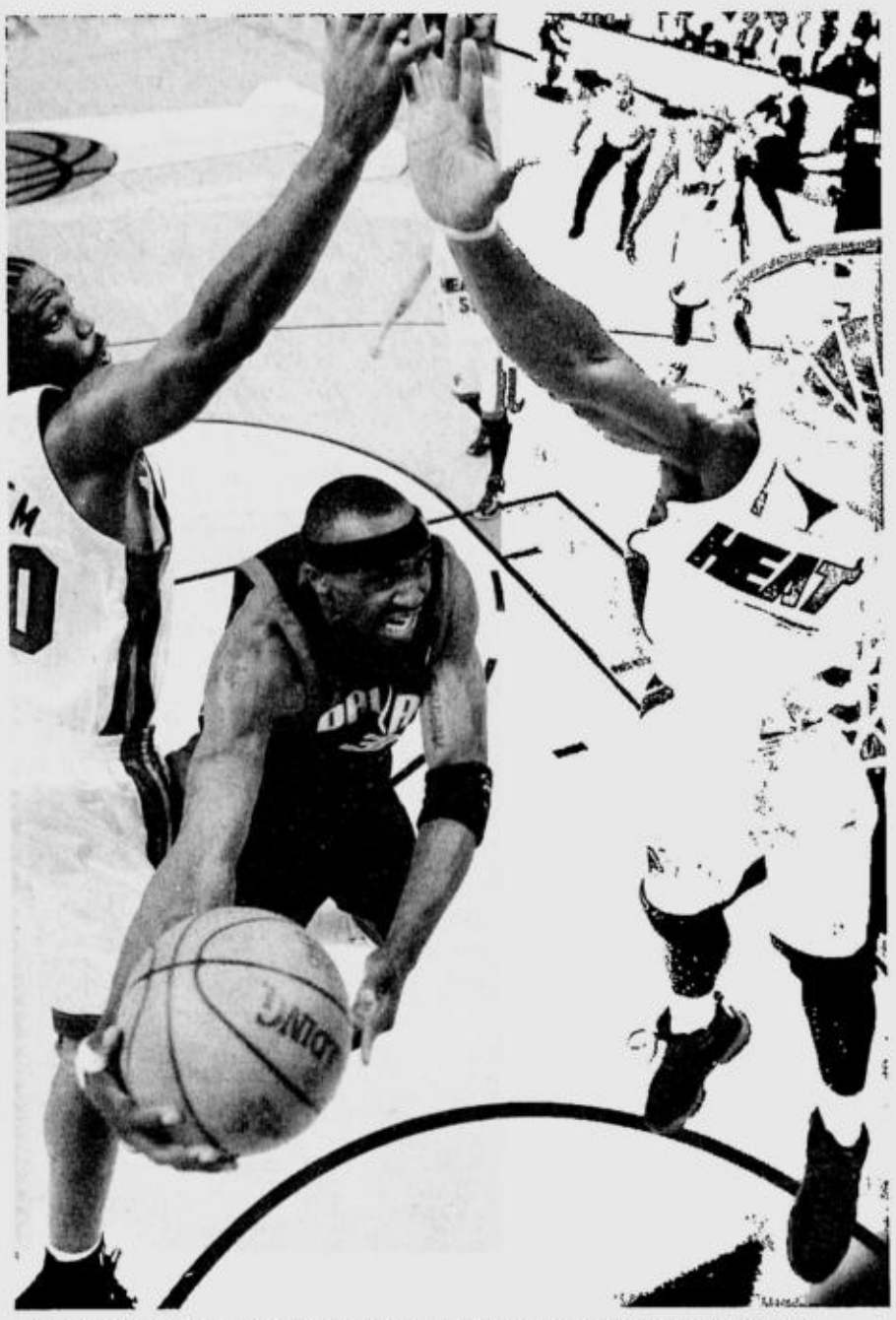
The Braves, who finished the classification round at 6-5, are favored over the Valencia dribblers of Mayor Jose Galario Jr. But like the Warriors, who ousted third-ranked Iligan Crusaders Monday, Golden Harvest could pull a surprise.

Over at the C.P. Tinga gym in Taguig City, the Pangasinan Hundred Islands will go up against host Forward Taguig at 5:30 p.m. while Bacchus/Harbour Centre-Manila of businessman Mikee Romero and coach Lawrence Chongson will take on winless Laguna-Sta. Rosa at 7:30.

The winners will advance to the next round of the tourney sponsored by Panasonic, Sulpicio Lines, Nature's Spring Mineral Water, Spring Cooking Oil, Regent Foods, Firefly Lightings, Molten and Prime Channel.

Defending champion Ozamiz Cotta and Spring Cooking Oil-Parañaque gained automatic semifinal slots by ruling the southern and northern divisions, respectively.

"We have to work on our defense and mental toughness especially now that we're playing on the road," said new Valencia head coach Noli Tagsip. "The team with the bigger heart will prevail."



MAVERICKS' Jason Terry (center) penetrates the defense put up by Heat's Alonzo Mourning (right) and Udonis Haslem. REUTERS

Heat wax hot in 4th period, nip Mavericks

DALLAS—THE MIAMI HEAT STAGED A FRENETIC FOURTH-QUARTER RALLY to defeat the Dallas Mavericks 98-96 Tuesday and propel themselves back into the hunt for an NBA championship.

Reserve guard Gary Payton hit a 17-foot jump shot with 9.3 seconds left to give Miami a 97-95 lead and cap an improbable turnaround in the final five minutes.

Dallas forward Dirk Nowitzki, who led the Mavericks with 30 points, had a chance to tie the game with 3.4 seconds left but could hit only one of two free throws.

A foul shot by Dwyane Wade with one second left provided the final 98-96 margin. Following a time-out, Josh Howard's errant shot from an alley-oop pass ended the game and Dallas's hopes for an easy path to their first NBA title.

Dallas leads the best-of-seven series 2-1 but the next two games are in Miami.

"I'm absolutely without a doubt a true believer," a jubilant Heat coach Pat Riley said. "It comes down to one shot. Gary Payton makes the shot, we trust, and we're on to another day."

The Heat squandered a nine-point halftime lead by getting outscored 34-16 in the third quarter and trailed 77-68 entering the final frame.

Dallas led by as many as a dozen in the final quarter and held a 91-81 lead with less than five minutes to go.

But the acrobatic Wade, who scored 42 points and grabbed 13 rebounds, scored seven points during a 17-5 charge the rest of the way to breathe new life into the Heat's title hopes.

Wade said he looked at the scoreboard midway through the fourth quarter and thought, "I ain't going out like this.

"We didn't want to go down 3-0, man," said Wade. "You just try to do what you can to get your team over the hump. If you make some plays, it might energize some other guys."

Nowitzki conceded the loss would be "a tough one to swallow for us."

"We couldn't really get anything done down the stretch on both ends of the floor," he said. "Maybe we started to relax too early or celebrate. I don't know what it was.

"But we didn't defend them the way we did before and we couldn't get anything to drop. So it's obviously frustrating.

The only good thing is we're still up 2-1."

Wade hit 14 of 26 shots and 13 of 18 from the line to lead four Heat players in double figures.

Three-time NBA Finals MVP Shaquille O'Neal added 16 points and 11 rebounds for Miami but only took nine shots and once again had trouble with the Mavericks' swarming defense.

But he did hit two key free throws with 1:48 left to pull Miami to within 93-90. That is a big accomplishment for someone who hit just two of 16 in the first two games of the series.

"We never gave up," the 34-year-old O'Neal said. "We just kept playing, showed a lot of heart, a lot of intensity."

Josh Howard scored 11 of his 21 points in the third quarter to stake the Mavericks to their nine-point lead entering the final quarter.

Dallas, seeking the first title in its 26-year history, appeared well on its way to a 3-0 series lead, an advantage no team has ever been able to overcome in the NBA Finals. *Reuters*

Sixers dunker NBA Madness special guest

By Jasmine W. Payo

IGUODALA

HIGH-FLYING ANDRE Iguodala of the Philadelphia 76ers will be the special guest of the 2006 NBA Madness on July 20 to 22 at the Araneta Coliseum.

"We think it's going to be his breakout year," said Carlo Singon, senior manager of marketing partnership of NBA Asia, in a press conference yesterday at the Crowne Plaza in Ortigas. "Last year we brought Luke Walton (of the Los Angeles Lakers) and he had a great year."

Iguodala, who bagged a runner-up finish in the 2006 NBA All-Star slam dunk competition, will be arriving with New York Knicks rookie forward Channing Frye and the San Antonio Spurs' Silver Dancers.

"It's the biggest NBA Madness," said Jude Turcuato, Solar Sports' vice president for marketing. "It's a chance for the fans to get in touch with the league itself."

The NBA Madness Celebrity Jam, which will showcase a star-studded basketball game and live musical performances, will also be among the highlight of the month-long event.

"We're hoping to get our NBA players do some exhibition dunks," said Singson. "For the Celebrity Jam, we'll be inviting legends from local leagues, actors and singers."

The event kicked off with the NBA Finals viewing party last June 12, where over 800 fans watched Game 2 of the Finals series between the Dallas Mavericks and the Miami Heat at the Robinsons Movieworld.

A mall tour will start this weekend at the Robinsons Starmill Pampanga. Alie dela Cruz, assistant brand manager of Coca-Cola, said promo winners will get a chance to watch an exhibition game in China and the NBA Madness in Hong Kong.

Abapo challenges Paba king Bahari

PHILIPPINE JUNIOR WELTER CHAMP BART Abapo challenges Pan Asia Boxing Association super-lightweight king Daudy Bahari in a 12-round showdown today at the Swissotel The Stamford in Singapore.

If victorious, the ALA boy Abapo gets recognition as the first person to win a crown in Singapore after the colony returned to promoting professional boxing after a 20-year hiatus.

At yesterday's weigh-in presided by Paba director general Alan Kim, Bahari came in at 139.4 lbs, while Abapo tipped the scales at138.8 lbs for the bout that will be televised live by Star Sports. Bahari (28-1-1, 11 KOs) has his work cut out for him today against Abapo (17-5-3, 12 KOs). *Salven Lagumbay*

Asaphil holds new polls July 22

THE AMATEUR SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION OF THE PHILIPPINES (ASAPHIL) WILL HOLD A NEW election on July 22 after the result of the May 11 polls was declared invalid by the Philippine Olympic Committee. POC legal counsel Emigdio Tanjuatco said the May 11 elections where former Asaphil head Mario Raymundo emerged as president did not comply with a basic election provision calling for a 15-day notice to be given to its directors. Tanjuatco said Asaphil directors Rolando Rivera of Rizal and Luis Climaco of Zamboanga had complained to the POC that they were not informed of the elections. He added that all incumbent Asaphil officials led by president Harry Angping will keep their original posts until the July 22 polls.

SPORTSWATCH

JVC badminton draws banner field

A HUGE CAST OF 1,750 PLAYERS, FEATURING THE COUNTRY'S FINEST SHUTTlers and rising stars, will see action in the sixth staging of the JVC Open Badminton Championship firing off June 25 with the qualifiers at PowerSmash in Makati. Of the total field, 523 will be clashing for top honors in the elite division while 401 will mix it up in junior 16-under category of the P1 million event, sponsored by JVC (Phils.) Inc. The field will fight it out in the week-long elims for spots in the tournament proper, which kicks off July 2 at the Glorietta Activity Center in Makati. For details, log on to www.jvcbadminton.com. The elite masters, which stakes P35,000 to each winner in five categories, drew 153 entries, including the Asuncion siblings—Kennie and Kennevic.

Rizal, Pampanga breeders join derby

WITH TWO MORE WEEKS TO GO BEFORE THE BIG SHOWDOWN, THE NUMber of entries continues to swell in connection with Roligon Mega Cockpit's Hatawan Sa Tag-ulan 6-cock derby. Slated on July 1, 4, 6, 8 and 11, the derby stakes a whopping guaranteed prize of P3.5 million. Twenty more cockers and breeders from Rizal, Pampanga, Cavite and Bulacan registered yesterday, bringing to 150 the number of confirmed participants so far. Host Rolly Ligon pegged the entry fee at P8,800 to allow more participants take a shot at the jackpot prize, including the brand new Honda Civic for the fastest win champion.

Las Piñas cockfest: 50 fights today

ANOTHER BLOCKBUSTER 3-COCK DERBY WITH 50 FIGHTS GETS UNDERWAY at Las Piñas Coliseum tonight. Hosts Lito Servidad and Allan Damian said majority of the participants are from Cavite, Laguna, Parañaque and Las Piñas. At stake is a cash prize of P300,000. Entries must be submitted until 2 p.m. today. For details, call 873-1040 and 874-3910. Meanwhile, LPC's Fastest Win One-Cock Ulutan comes next on June 22, with P110,000 in guaranteed prize. A fastest win champion will be selected every five fights and will receive P4,000 and a mountain bike. A bonus of P1,000 per win will go to the participants, said host Preco Reyes.

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Tri)—Diestra (5), Tango With Me (4), Gifted Guest (1)
Race 2—(Ort/Tri)—Wynn's Connection (1), Makati Haven (2), Kim Possible (5), Ajeena (7)
Race 3—(Ort/Tri)—Benny Wise (8), Stoops (5), Arctic Desert (3), Renzie Stays (4)
Race 4—(Ort/Tri)—Kawiniwii (7), Habagat/Queen of Gaia (4), Can and Will (1), Fasteller (8)
Race 5—(Ort/Tri)—Prince Richard (7), Gold Ruler (4), Baling Ganda (5), manicor's Charm (8)
Race 6—(Ort/Tri)—Uncle (4), Virgin Island (1), Oveture (2), Nitty Gritty (5)
Race 7—(Penta/Ort/Tri)— Fair Urduja (3), Daddy's Girl (4), Empire State (7), Tanging Ikaw (9), Royal Rose (6)
Race 8—(Super 6/Ort/Tri)—Diamond Sky 91), Sir Olizon (4), Vinta's Pride (7), Santa Fe (7), Magic Ewan Ko (2), Something Silver (6)

CHAMPS: The University of the East Red Warriors emerged champions in the 2006-2007 Manila Inter-Club Amateur Basketball Association tournament after beating the Mapua Cardinals, 85-65, June 8 at the FEU gym. The Red Warriors with UE EVP-treasurer and team manager Carmelita Mateo (standing, 9th from left), coach Dindo Pumaren (standing, 6th from right), assistant coaches Gido Babilonia and Vic Escudero and fans.

Who's laughing at Shaq?

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

THERE ARE TRUE LIES.

But false facts?

A fact is absolute. If it's a fact, it's the truth. If it's a lie, it's fiction.

Shaquille O'Neal was present in Games 1 and 2 and that was a fact.

Another fact: Shaq was also absent in both games in the sense that he played tamely and half-heartedly.

As a result, Miami lost both games to Dallas.

As a result, Dallas moved within two games of winning the NBA title.

After Game 2, Shaq was fined $10,000 for avoiding the standard media conference.

I don't know if Miami management fined Shaq for non-appearance in Game 2, but if it did, fine. In that game, Shaq scored a career-low 5 points.

Time to call in sick?

No. Yesterday, not all of Shaq's 330 pounds stuffed into a 7-2 frame reappeared.

Just part of it as manifested by his 16-point output, 11 more than his Game 2 output—still well below his 28.9 average, but good enough to bail Miami out of trouble.

His last two free throws made the difference in Miami's 98-96 win—but that's getting ahead of the story.

What reappeared yesterday, wholly, from the giant was—holy cow!—anger which thundered at—holy cow!—the most unlikely place: the stripe.

Who said he couldn't shoot consecutive free throws?

In yesterday's first half, Shaq made two straight free throws, helping Miami build a 52-43 halftime lead with Dywane Wade firing 20 points and grabbing 9 rebounds.

Who said the Big Fella couldn't shoot consecutive free throws?

With the game under-3 minutes to history yesterday, the game up in the air and Miami close to pressing the panic button, Shaq made two straight free throws, restoring calm to the Heat as Miami moved to within 3 off Dallas, 90-93.

Who's laughing at Shaq now?

You don't want bloody revenge from Godzilla, go, apologize to the genie. They're first cousins, you know.

Fact is, the Angry Giant was the Lovable Angel in yesterday's first half alone: 2-for-2 at the line, 4-for-5 from the field for a total of 10 points.

It couldn't get any better for one who took just 3 shots on 19 ball possessions in the same opening half of Game 2 on Monday.

After Game 2, everybody's almost saying Shaq had sashayed out of Miami, which held a parade in welcoming him to the prideful city of salsas and sambas just a couple of years ago.

Now, please stop saying Shaq wouldn't stand up to answer the phone (he hates cell phones).

Not only was Pat Riley, the three-time coaching champion, calling. Wade, too.

Look, Wade can exhaust all his phone loads but if Shaq wouldn't budge, Miami's maimed for the season.

Wade, with his aerial maneuvers and all, can't do it alone. Admit it, he's just co-pilot and Captain Shaq is in control anytime he wants to. As in yesterday's crash-landing in Miami.

Almost as easily, the turbulence of a 13-point deficit with 6:20 left was bleeped out of the Miami radar upon Shaq's urgings.

With Wade wading through controls in backing up the energized Shaq, Miami, with aid from the almost forgotten reliable flight engineer Gary Payton, chugged to a 98-96 landing.

OK, Payton, step up, please? He jumped to shove Miami to a 97-95 lead, 9.07 seconds left.

After Dirk Nowitzki, the usually reliable Mav, muffed the second of two charities with 3.04 ticks remaining, Wade halved his own free throws with exactly a second left for the final 98-96 count.

Wade's last free throw gave him 42 points for the day, 20 of them in the first half backed by a searing 11-of-12 from the line.

I cite the free throws because the free throws had been the almost lifetime bane of, well, Shaq.

This time, the giant himself defied the most giant of odds by sinking back-to-back free throws not once but twice.

As a result, Dallas lost a virtually won-game and now needs two games instead of just one match to win the NBA title—if they ever achieve that at all.

Shaq going 1-of-9 from the line in Game 1 is history.

Shaq going 2-of-16 from the line in two games is history.

Those facts didn't surprise me one bit.

But seeing the Shaq free-throw facts in yesterday's Game 3, who's laughing?

I'm not.

And that's a fact.

* * *

Send comments to menju@pldtdsl.net

Open trackfest centerpiece of Olympic tilt

NUEVA ECIJA PRACTICALLY serves as the main hub of the 1st Philippine Olympic Festival June 22-25 with the holding of the Milo National Open track and field championships at the newly built Nueva Ecija Sports Complex in Palayan City.

More than 100 athletes from six countries have confirmed participation in the meet that will test the true worth of the Filipino tracksters bidding to join the RP contingent in the Asian Games in Doha late this year.

The performance of the locals against the visiting entries from Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Chinese-Taipei, Hong Kong and Korea is expected to be closely monitored by the POC Task Force Asian Games.

"We are proud to be the main attraction of the 1st Philippine Olympic Festival," said Gov. Tomas Joson III. "And we're very grateful to the Philippine Olympic Committee, the Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association and its partner Milo for choosing Nueva Ecija as venue of the athletics event."

The Nueva Ecija side of the festival is supported by AMA Computer University, Petron, Globe, Fontana Leisure Resort and Creativity Lounge.

Kaka helps Brazil shake off Croatia

France still can't buy a goal; Korea wins away from home

BERLIN—BRAZIL, FRANCE AND SOUTH KOrea picked up just about where they left off four years ago.

The defending champion Brazilians won their eighth straight World Cup match Tuesday, getting a 44th-minute goal from Kaka to shake off pesky Croatia, 1-0, in Group F.

The French, who won the World Cup in 1998 but went home early last time, failed to score a goal in their fourth straight World Cup match—this time in a 0-0 draw with Switzerland in Group G. And unexpected semifinalists as co-hosts last time, South Korea won away from home for the first time in 15 World Cup matches, beating Togo, 2-1, in the same group.

Brazil, which is trying to win a record sixth World Cup title, got a string of saves from goalkeeper Dida at the Olympic Stadium, while Ronaldo was taken off in the 69th after a below-par performance.

Brazil started well, hogging possession and relying on the defensive midfield pairing of Emerson and Ze Roberto to win the ball back when moves broke down. It faded midway through the first half under tough Croatian tackling, however.

Croatia limited Brazil to a handful of long-range shots, and captain Niko Kovac initiated a handful of attacks before going off with an injury in the 40th.

Three minutes later, Cafu picked out Kaka on the edge of the area and the AC Milan playmaker took one touch to knock the ball past Niko Kranjcar and another to steady himself before sending a left-foot shot past Croatia goalkeeper Stipe Pletikosa.

"I personally had a good start in the World Cup. I scored a goal, participated in several moves," Kaka said. "The second half was especially difficult because we had trouble getting organized and suffered a lot on the left side."

The last time the French team scored in a World Cup game was when it beat Brazil 3-0 in the 1998 final. Switzerland also held France to draws in two qualifying games.

"We know that team all too well," France coach Raymond Domenech said. "It's the sort of match we expected. We could have beaten them in the first half. They could have won the match in the second half.

"This was a high-level match from both teams."

Despite being forced to play as a lone striker in Stuttgart, Thierry Henry went close with three shots and a header in the first half, while Zinedine Zidane's deft touches set up the best French moves.

Switzerland, however, almost went ahead in the 23rd minute when Tranquillo Barnetta sent a free kick into the area but Philippe Senderos and Alexander Frei both failed to get a touch and the ball hit the post.

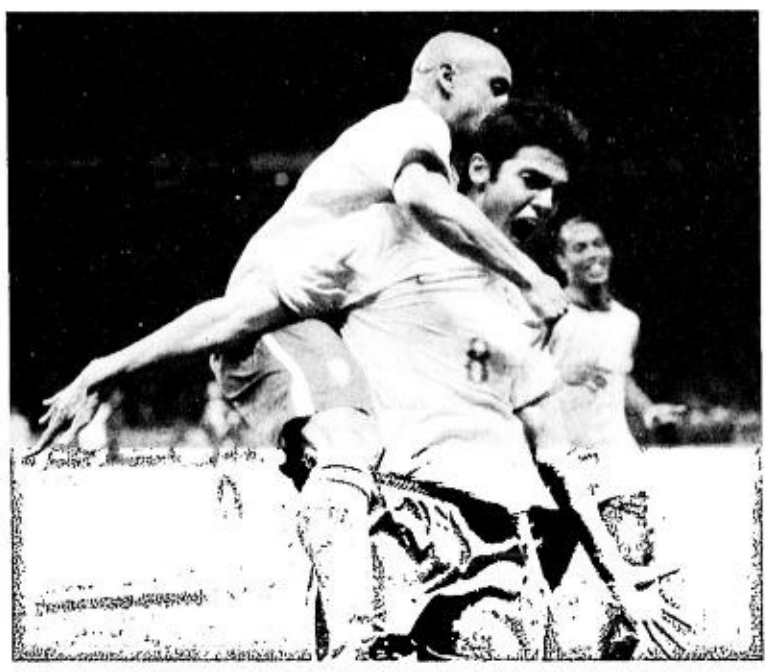
France lost to Senegal and Denmark at the last World Cup and left after the first round.

Ahn Jung-hwan scored the winning goal in the 72nd minute for South Korea, which faced a team that nearly played in Frankfurt without a coach.

Togo made its chaotic debut at the World Cup with coach Otto Pfister quitting Friday and then returning for the match. The 68-year-old German had left the team because of a dispute between his players and the country's soccer federation over bonuses.

Mohamed Kader gave the African team the lead in the 31st with a shot from 14 meters (yards). *AP*

FRENCH midfielder Zinedine Zidane (left) gets his view blocked in a possession battle with Swiss Johann Vogel. AFP



KAKA celebrates his goal with Roberto Carlos (left) and Ronaldinho (right).

Victory was good, performance bad

BERLIN—IT WAS JUST 1-0. BUT it was a victory—steering Brazil toward a record sixth World Cup title.

"I think the result was exceptional," Brazil manager Carlos Alberto Parreira said. "The team's performance, evidently, needs to improve and it will improve in the next matches."

Brazil won with a goal by Kaka in the 44th minute, but the defending champion was constantly challenged and just barely avoided allowing an equalizer.

"This match was fundamental for us," Parreira said. "In World Cups it's fundamental to win the first match."

The three points put Brazil in good position to reach the next round. A win Sunday against Australia in Munich will be enough for the Brazilians to advance.

Brazil dominated early and created several scoring opportunities, but Croatia slowly evened the match.

"We played maybe the most difficult team in this group. They are very experienced and defend really well," Parreira said.

The Brazilian manager added he expects Brazil to gradually improve during the competition.

"We are at 60, 70 percent," he said. "Within what was expected."

Midfielder Kaka, chosen the man of the match, agreed.

"We needed a little more movement, creativity, but I think considering it was the opener it was a good match," Kaka said.

Kaka converted his chance with a well-placed left-footer from about 20 meters. *AP*

The World Cup in the eyes of a non-fan

By Arlyn dela Cruz
Contributor

BERLIN—WAKING UP THAT FRIDAY MORNING, the ninth of June here, all indications showed it would not be the typical Berlin day that I got used to in the last four weeks that I have been here.

For one, the sun was shining real bright, which was a total departure from the last weeks where the summer months were laced with heavy rains, windy and chilly days and even snow in some parts of Southern Berlin.

From the window of the room I am occupying on the fourth floor of the apartment in Genter Strasse in Wedding, Berlin, I was introduced to the football madness that is the World Cup. German and Brazil flags adorned almost all the windows of the adjacent residential buildings. Germany is a hometown favorite while Brazil is undoubtedly the strongest team competing in this World Cup.

A knock on my door confirmed the feverish support for the game.

It was Stella, a colleague from Nigeria who is a co-participant in a seven-week Science Program Course sponsored by Deutsche Welle Akademie. "Hey girl, are you ready to snap pictures on the first day of the World Cup?" she asked. Stella, like me, is not a football fan. She does not even know any of the World Cup teams participating.

Walking toward the Loepolplatz U-Bahn Tram Station reminded us further that the World Cup has indeed invaded Germany. High-end cars were carrying German flags. I saw an Italian flag on the next street and a Polish flag on a passing car.

In the middle of the day, Sarah from Kenya and Jaqueline from Zambia came in wearing T-shirts of the teams they are supporting.

Renee came to class with a neutral white color. "I am supporting Germany because I think they are working hard."

I am left to wonder why the Philippines has no team in the World Cup.

In the middle of one of the 70 plus wide screen installed in Germany for public viewing, I was asked to pick a team to cheer for by my co-participants. Sarah, who is an avid Brazilian fan, told me, "Arlyn, Costa Rica needs supporters so I am supporting them in this opening game (against host Germany)." I was swayed by her convictions and chose to cheer for Costa Rica for the opening game but I was reluctant to really go and cheer for them knowing that I am in the middle of German fans.

The first goal made by the German team brought a deafening roar from the crowd gathered in the well-secured public area we chose near Potsdam Platz.

When the game was finally over with Germany winning 4-2, there was a thunderous applause and cheers that lasted for more than a minute.

Closing the door on my unit to call it a day, I am left with the thought that while I enjoyed watching the game, there was something missing. It was easy to pinpoint what it was: the sense of national pride.

Next time, I would either be an audience or assigned to cover the event as a reporter. It would be an overwhelming feeling to see the Philippine flag being waved among the other flags of the world during the event.

I still have two more weeks left here in Berlin and we will surely watch a game or two more. And guess what I intend to do: Wave that RP flag and show the world that the Philippines too is watching this ball game that seems to have the power to unify the world.

La Salle books finals ticket; Adamson up

GAMES SATURDAY (*Blue Eagle Gym*)
12 nn—Lyceum vs FEU
2 p.m.—La Salle vs San Sebastian

POWERHOUSE LA SALLE SEALED A FINALS trip by creaming Far Eastern University even as Adamson allowed itself to get dragged to a fifth set by Lyceum before eking out a 25-15, 20-25, 25-20, 13-25, 15-10, yesterday in the Shakey's V-League semifinals at the Blue Eagle Gym.

The Lady Archers whipped FEU, 25-22, 25-14, 25-18, to seal the first finals slot with their 11th win in as many assignments.

Adamson, meanwhile, snapped out of a two-game funk and tied San Sebastian behind La Salle. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

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Agojo spikes Samsung Amateur field

AGOJO: School break

DAVAO—SCHOOL BREAK TAKES ON A different meaning for Jayvie Agojo.

Back home on vacation, the Pepperdine U standout in the US NCAA spikes a tough field sprinkled with national team hopefuls when the Samsung Amateur Tour kicks off today.

The field is bursting at the seams with 196 players registered, 30 of whom will dispute the centerpiece men's championship division over 72 holes at the challenging Rancho Palos Verdes course, the Sta. Lucia Realty gem now considered as one of the south's best.

On the other hand, it will be some sort of a stable war in the men's championship action featuring the talents of the ICTSI team, the caddie standouts of Calatagan/Canlubang and Del Monte.

Mike Bibat, Miko Yee and Miko Alejandro will fight for the ICTSI banner, Jonel Ababa, brothers Joseph and Mario Labajo battle for caddie pride while Del Monte aces Ben Miñoza, Tristan Tabanas and Boboy Jaraula seek a victory for their team.

Also joining this third leg of a nationwide elimination series are Tommy Manotoc and Louie Dacudao and Jay Bayron.

The event is sponsored chiefly by Samsung and co-sponsored by Taylor Made, C-Lium Fibre, Microtel, Titleist, Custom Clubmakers/KZG and Sunbolt. Media partners are Jam 88.3, Wave 89.1, Magic 89.9 and 99.5 RT.

Agojo, meanwhile, is out for a big test against jungolfers Cyna Rodriguez, recent winner in the Jakarta Asian Championships, Crystal Superal and Mia Piccio in ladies' Class A action.

SPORTS

Clavecilla, Gaston share top

By Musong R. Castillo

SILANG, CAVITE—IGGY CLEVECILLA floundered in the final two holes but managed to cling to a share of the lead with former champion Francis Gaston after 18 holes of the Philippine Seniors Amateur championship.

Clavecilla bogeyed 17 and 18 after a brilliant eagle-2 on the 15th to finish with a six-over-par 78 like Gaston, who lost the title to Rolly Viray last year at Mount Malarayat.

The co-leaders had a two-stroke advantage over unknown club bet Joe Lao and four over Riviera club president Danny Pizarro, who shot an 82.

The Riviera's Langer course was unforgiving as usual as Viray, already battling a shaky swing, skied to an 84 for a share of fifth with another struggling favorite, Philippine Sports Commissioner Richie Garcia.

"It played so tough, so hard," Viray told the Inquirer. "The conditions out there today were ideal, no winds, no rains, but the course played so hard and everyone got a taste of it."

Viray had two double bogeys, the first on the par-3 8th when he found the pond before the green and the second on the 17th when his tee shot landed in the bunker behind the small green.

The 51-year-old, who immediately went back to the Canlubang driving range to find quick-fix solutions to his takeaway, also three-putted the 18th.

Seve Chua had a 42-41 for solo fifth, a stroke ahead of Viray (43-41) and Garcia (43-41), while Caloy Coscoluella was in 13th spot after an 86 (41-45).

In the featured flight with Clavecilla and the defending champion, Gaston had the best back nine in the field, matching par after carding a 42 coming out.

Clavecilla had a total of eight bogeys, a double bogey, a birdie and that eagle in a 41-37 card.

Ted Runes fired a 77 for a two-stroke lead over Tommy Joson III (70) and six over former Sen. Tito Sotto (83) in Category I reserved for players 55 to 59.

Tito Eusebio was the Category II (60-64) leader after an 82 for a two-shot lead over NGAP president Leandro Mendoza (84) and Pete Cervantes (92).

Ben Liclican showed the way in Category III (65-69) with an 85 for a two-stroke lead over Danny Sarmiento (87).

CLAVECILLA gets lift on an eagle 2 on No. 15

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Koreans grab Masters lead

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE FOREIGNERS ARRIVED AND MADE A lot of noise.

Four unranked Koreans surged on top of the men's Masters qualifying even as the vaunted Malaysians prepared to shift to high gear Wednesday night in the 35th PBC-Boysen International Open Tenpin Bowling Championships at the Green Valley.

Seo Jung Hwan emerged the highest qualifier after rolling a four-game series of 1052, just a pin up on countryman Son Young Seok (1051). Kim Hyun Suk (1017) and Kong Jin Suk (1005) took the next two slots with JC Tupaz leading the local field with a 994total.

Tupaz edged ersthwhile leader Tyrone Ongpauco (986), Diego Candano (981), Markwin Tee (976), Kerwin Law (975), Biboy Rivera (971), Raoul Miranda (965), Takahiro Yoshida (964), Richie Poblete (960), CJ Suarez (942), Purvis Granger (942) and Benshir Layoso (940) in the local top 12.

Malaysian top bowler Azidi Ameran came through with a total of 969 to secure a spot in the overseas field, while Alex Liew, Asia's No. 7 player, rolled a 947 aggregate. Both local and foreign players have until tomorrow to qualify for the Masters which will be played June 16-17.

Asia's No. 2 female Choy Poh Lai was still trying to get feel of the lanes with a 232-236-200-215 series for an 883 total and a fifth spot in the overseas field of the ladies' Class O Masters.

Thai teener Angkana Netrviseth remained on top of the foreign field with a 934.

Liza Clutario still has the best qualifying score all in all with a 938. The highest ranked Filipina scored the second perfect game last Monday night in the doubles competitions.

Malaysia's Shalin Zulkifli, Asia's No. 1, struggled with an 819 to stay in the fringes of the qualifying table. She was in the list of reserves, along with teammate Wendy Chai, Asia's No. 3, who tallied 797.

Four-time World Cup champion Paeng Nepomuceno debuted in the tourney but his first-day effort lifted him only to the reserve list of the Masters qualifying after a 223-226-224-223 for a total of 896.

Nepomuceno teamed up with Chester King and Botchock Rey to place second in the men's Class O trios. He scored 407, while King and Rey had 481 and 458, respectively for 1346, 17 pins behind the trio of King, Rivera and Ongpauco.

Pimentel leads; Garcia tumbles

NEOPHYTE JOEL PIMENTEL OF THE Philippines stunned 5th-seeded Christer Jon Aplin of Singapore using the black pieces to remain unbeaten after four rounds of the 7th ASEAN Age-Group Chess Championships Wednesday at the Mercure Convention Center in Jakarta, Indonesia.

The 24th-ranked Pimentel, incoming freshman of De La Salle-Greenhills, now has a perfect 4.0 points to lead the boys' 14 and under division which attracted 42 age-grou pers.

"Focus lamang po ako sa laro at buti naman ay pumatak po." said Pimentel, who also beat 18th-seeded Galang Rambu Anarki of Indonesia in the third round late Tuesday.

Vietnamese Dong Bao Nghia beat countryman Tran Ngoc Lan to share the lead with Pimentel.

RP whiz kid Jan Emmanuel Garcia however, tasted his first loss in the boys' 12 and under at the hands of local bet Nicholas Rahman and got stuck at 3.0 points. Rahman seized the lead with 4.0 points.

The 10-year-old Garcia beat Shannon Scott Neubronner of Singapore in the third round.

John Ranel Morazo of Paniqui, Tarlac, and Paulo James Florendo of Zamboanga City also dropped their matches against Vietnam's Tran Thanh Tu and Ly Hong Nguyen. Morazo stayed at 2.0 points in the boys' 16 and under while Florendo has 2.5 points in the boys' 18 and under.

Unheralded Paulo Bersamina of Pasay City stunned top-seeded Lorencius Halomoan of Indonesia in the boys' 8-under to improve his record to 3.0 points, the same output of Melwyn Kenneth Baltazar, who drew with Le Thanh Liem of Vietnam in the boys' 10 and under.

NM Marlon Bernardino

Entertainment

Editor Emmie G. Velarde
...message to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart) or email us at pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

WILMA Galvante

No to program clones—GMA 7

'Before this licensing trend came we already had talent search shows'

By Nini Valera

FIRST THERE was ABS-CBN's "Pinoy Big Brother," a local franchise of the Netherlands-based Endemol Productions, which specializes in reality-based talent searches. Now comes "Pinoy Idol," local version of the wildly popular "American Idol."

In the next few weeks, "Pinoy Idol" is expected to col lide

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JUN 16 FRI 2:30 - 6:00PM - OPEN A PIZZA PARLOR - LEARN TO MAKE THESE ITALIAN FAVORITES. MOZARELLA-TOPPED BIG & THICK CRUST PIZZA (BAKED IN A RECTANGULAR PAN). THIN CRUST PIZZA W/ DIFFERENT TOPPINGS; FETTUCINE ALFREDO; SPAGHETTI CARBONARA, BREADED VEAL STEAKS W/ LEMON PEACH-FILLED CREPES W/ FRUIT SAUCE PLUS 12 BONUS RECIPES OF PASTAS & SANDWICHES. P1,800. BY SYLVIA

JUN 17 SAT 2:30 - 6:00PM - MERIENDA FARE; THE BEST, NEW RECIPE PANCIT PALABOK; LUMPIANG UBOD W/ HOMEMADE UBE & EGG WRAPPER; FRIED LUMPIANG SHANGHAI; MINI FRUIT CAKE BARS; SARAP-BAKED COCOROONS. P1,800. BY SYLVIA

JUN 20 & 21 (TUE & WED) 1:30 - 4:30PM - LEARN TO MAKE BOTTLED PRESERVES IN 2 LESSONS. P1,800. MANGO JAM, PINEAPPLE MANGO, APPLE SAUCE FOR ROAST TURKEY & PORKLOIN; UBE JAM; FRESH ORANGE MARMALADE, GUAVA JAM, STRAWBERRY; FRESH LEMON CURD MARMALADE BY LENI

JUN 22 THU 1:00 - 5:30PM - MONEY-MAKING SAUSAGES COURSE 3. LEARN 7 OF YOUR FAVORITES! FOOTLONG HOTDOGS, BEEF SAUSAGE JERKY USING "VIPPI" CASING USED FOR HOTDOG-MAKING; WHOLE CORNED BEEF SERVE IN 5-STAR HOTELS & RESTAURANTS; PORK HAMONADO & BEEF DE RECADO; THE BEST PAMPANGO PORK TOCINO; LONGANIZA LUCBAN P2,500. BY LENI R. ARAULLO IDEAL FOR HOME BUSINESS!

JUN 23 FRI 1:30 - 4:30PM - NOT TOO SPICY, AUTHENTIC, EASY THAI NOODLES, RICE, DESSERTS 3 - (9 RECIPES). THAI STREET NOODLES. PAD THAI, CURRIED NOODLES W/ BEEF; CRAB FRIED RICE, PORK FRIED RICE, BLACK RICE PUDDING, TAPIOCA PUDDING; THAI CUSTARD SQUASH W/ COCONUT CREAM P1,800. BY SYLVIA

JUN 24 SAT 1:30 - 5:00PM CHINESE COOKING. SAVORY STYLE FRIED CHICKEN. ROAST MONTEREY PORK LIEMPO, MRS. OLIVIA TEE'S FOOKIEN STYLE AMOY FRESH LUMPIA; PORK SIOMAI W/ QUAIL EGGS. HONGKONG SHRIMP SIOMAI; HACAO (SHRIMP DUMPLING W/ HOMEMADE CLEAR WRAPPER). P1,800. BY SYLVIA

JUN 26 MON 1:30 - 5:15PM - LIGHT & AIRY ENSAYMADAS. CHEESEROLLS SPECIAL EGG PANDESAL; PANDESAL W/ FILLING, CINNAMON ROLLS BREAD BAKING MADE EASY! P1,800. BY SYLVIA

JUN 27, 28 & 29 (TUE, WED, & THU) - 9:00AM - 5:00PM - ADVANCED FONDANT WORKSHOP. COLLETTE PETERS' STYLE (CONDIDERED BY WILTON & LIFESTYLE CHANNEL AS THE WORLDS #1 CAKE DECORATOR. (COURSE ATTENDED BY LENI IN CHICAGO OCT - NOV 2005) 3 LESSONS. P5,500. INCLUDES INGREDIENTS, LUNCH, SNACK (EXCEPT SCISSORS, CUTTERS, BOXES, CAKE PLATES, STYRO W/C YOU MUST BRING OR BUY IN CLASS) CHOICE OF COLLETTE'S WORLD FAMOUS "CROOKED CAKE" OR PILLOW CAKE". PERFECT, EASY, FOOLPROOF FONDANT RECIPE! ALL APPLICABLE CUTOUTS OR FLOWERS WILL BE PREPARED IN CLASS FOR THE DESIGN OF YOUR CHOICE

JUN 30 FRI 1:30 - 4:30PM - DELICIOUS CHICKEN CORDON BLEU W/ CREAMY SAUCE; PAELLA NEGRA SPICY SQUID RINGS IN GARLIC SAUCE DEBONED LEMONY SOY CHICKEN ON WILD RICE; ORIENTAL SPRING ROLLS W/ SWEET CHILI SAUCE EASY TIRAMISU. P1,800. BY SYLVIA

JUL 1 SAT 1:30 - 5:00PM - CHINESE COOKING: PATA TIM (BRAISED PORK SHOULDER); SPICED CHILI CRABS, PATO TIM (BRAISED DUCK W/ VEGETABLES), SWEET & SOUR, YANCHOW FRIED RICE, SPICY PRAWNS CANDIES BANANAS DIPPED IN ICE P1,800

JUL 3 MON 1:00 - 5:30PM - LEARN TO BAKE & DECORATE WILTON ALL-OCCASION COOKIES ON POPSICLE STICKS USING ROYAL ICING. LEARN TO BAKE & DECORATE MUFFINS USING FLUFFY BUTTERCREAM ICING. P1,800. PLS. BRING 3 PIPING BAGS, 2 COUPLERS, 1 ROUND & 1 STAR TIP (ALSO AVAILABLE FOR SALE AT P300/SET AT THE CULINARY STUDIO. ABOVE USED BY BAKESHOPS & CRUISE SHIPS. IDEAL FOR HOMEBUSINESS). FOR BEGINNERS. BY LENI

JUL 4 TUE 1:30 - 5:00PM - THE BEST OVEN-BAKED PAELLA - ROAST STUFFED MAGNOLIA JUMBO CHICKEN, PASTEL DE LENGUA, CALLOS MADRILEÑA, BLACK FOREST #2. IDEAL FOR CATERERS & PARTY GIVERS P1,800. BY SYLVIA

JUL 5 WED 1:00 - 5:30PM - 7 MONEY - MAKING SAUSAGES COURSE 1 - GERMAN (BRATWURST); HUNGARIAN KIELBASA, MEXICAN LA; GREEK, SHEBOYGAN BRATS SAUSAGES BAGUIO & CHORIZO MACAO BONUS ATCHARA & HOT POTATO SALAD BY LENI R. ARAULLO. P2,500.

JUL 6 THU 1:30 - 5:00PM - BUSINESS BAKESHOP BESTSELLERS! BIG UNIFORM-SIZED FROZEN UP TO 6 MONTHS SILVANAS (MINI SANS RIVAL); BRAZO DE MERCEDES, CLASSIC CHOCOLATE MOUSSE CAKE; MACAPUNO PANDAN CAKE W/ MAGNOLIA GOLD BUTTER ICING P1,800. BY MORELLA

JUL 7 FRI 1:30 - 5:15PM - MULTI-LAYERED, FLAKIEST CROISSANTS, PUFF PASTRY MEAT FILLED TURNOVERS, ASSORTED GLAZED DANISH PASTRIES. P1,800. BY MORELLA

JUL 8 SAT 1:30 - 5:00PM - BEST-SELLER OVEN-BAKED CHICKEN PIES IN MUFFIN CUPS: FLAKY EMPANADA; MELTS-IN-THE-MOUTH MAMON, MAGNOLIA GOLD BITTER SLICES; PUTO PAO BONUS RECIPES OF MACAROONS, PUTO FLOUR UBE & TRI-COLORED PUTO P1,800. BY MORELLA

JUL 9 SUN 1:30 - 5:00PM - REYNOSO-GALA & ARAULLO KAKANIN! MELTS-IN-THE-MOUTH SPECIAL RICE BIBINGKA; SAPIN-SAPIN ESPECIAL. DELICIOUS EASY-TO-MAKE RICE SUMAN; HOMEMADE HOPIA W/ MONGO OR UBE FILLING BONUS RECIPE: APONG METYANG'S CASSAVA CAKE P1,800. BY MORELLA

JUL 10 MON 1:30 - 5:00PM - THE LATEST MONEY-MAKING HOTEL & BAKESHOP BESTSELLERS! CHOCO LAVA CAKES (CHOCO CENTERS WILL OOZE OUT). "TARTUFO" (ITALIAN DOME CHOCOLATE COVERED ICE CREAM CAKE W/ CHOCO CAKE BASE CAN BE FROZEN FOR A MONTH OR LONGER); CREAM PUFFS W/ BAVARIAN & CHOCO FILLING W/ 2 GLAZES. THE YUMMIEST OF NEW YORK RESTAURANT SCHOOL CHEF INSTRUCTOR LORRIE REYNOSO'S BAKED CHEESE CAKE. P1,800. BY MORELLA

JUL 12 WED 1:30 - 5:00PM - UBE CHIFFON CAKE; ROCKY ROAD. MOIST CHOCOLATE CAKE, FOOD FOR THE GODS & WALNUT BROWNIES PLUS TIPS ON CONVERTING CAKES INTO JELLY ROLLS & MUFFINS. DELICIOUS CAKES SOLD IN TOP BAKESHOPS! ALL CAKES W/ DIFFERENT ICINGS! P1,800. BY MORELLA

JUL 13 THU 1:30 - 5:00PM - MONEY-MAKING FASTFOOD CART SPECIALTIES BY MORELLA. DELICIOUS CORN DOGS, WAFFLE W/ HOMEMADE CHOCOLATE / CARAMEL, NACHOS "TOPOTOS" W/ MONTEREY MEAT FILLING & CHEESE DIP HOMEMADE SHAWARMA WRAP W/ BEEF FILLING & CHEESE DIP. P1,800.

JUL 14 FRI 1:30 - 5:15PM - POPULAR JAPANESE DISHES 1. LEARN TO COOK JAPANESE STYLE TENDERLOIN STEAKS W/ BELL PEPPERS, MONGO SPROUTS, WHITE ONIONS; JAPANESE MIXED RICE (KAMAMESHI), YAKITORI (CHICKEN BARBECUE IN SKEWERS), MISO SOUP, BREADED PORK CHOPS (TONKATSU), SUKIYAKI; CUCUMBER IN JAPANESE VINEGAR DRESSING, SWEET DRIED DILIS (APPETIZER) P1,800. BY SYLVIA

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No to program clones—GMA

From page A2-1

with the latest reincarnation of "PBB." Coming up is "Dream Academy," another talent search show that would have the contestants stay in the controlled environment of Big Brother's house while they are primed for competition.

In this scenario where foreign franchises are gearing up for battle, GMA 7 says it has opted to bat for homegrown talent search shows.

Wilma Galvante, GMA 7 senior vice president for entertainment TV, says the network "doesn't need to buy [a foreign franchise and] to get other people's ideas."

She is referring to the licensing fees that other networks have to pay to produce and air local versions of foreign material.

"These are talent search shows. Before this licensing [trend] came, we already had 'Starstruck,'" Galvante points out.

"Starstruck," which Galvante conceptualized in 2002, is a reality-based talent search show whose winners (a pair) is built up by the network as matinee idols.

Back in time

"It's like bringing back to the public this generation's Guy and Pip, and Vi and Bot," explains Galvante.

The first "Starstruck" edition produced the tandem of Jennylyn Mercado and Mark Herras, who later became off-screen lovers but later broke up supposedly to concentrate on individual careers. But the pairing seems to have remained a hit. The network says "I Luv New York," where the love team is in the main cast, is rating well.

Galvante notes that keeping the network's original talent search shows has given her flexibility to improve them and also to maximize resources.

"The talent shows have evolved in keeping with new technologies like texting," she says. "Viewers vote by SMS—this makes them involved. At the end of the day, a show's success is hinged on audience acceptance."

Unlike foreign franchises, Galvante points out, their homegrown shows make their own rules.

"I don't have to follow any bible of franchise owners," she says, referring to the program clones. "For example, along the way, we can factor in other features."

"Pinoy Pop Superstar," another talent search on GMA 7, has expanded to include Filipino talents based abroad.

"Next year, the search may extend to the Middle East," Galvante says.

GMA 7's shows also include a talent development deal for the winners, who are guaranteed a minimum income of P1 million a year.

Commitment

"That is our commitment to the winners," says Galvante. "We also sign up the other contestants."

Winners like Jennylyn Mercado and Mark Herras have become part of the industry, she adds. "I can't say that of the winners in other networks' talent search shows."

"Starstruck" enters its fourth season this year. As in previous years, Galvante says, she expects to discover another set of matinee idols.

"We don't need to be a franchise to do that," she says. "We've already done it."

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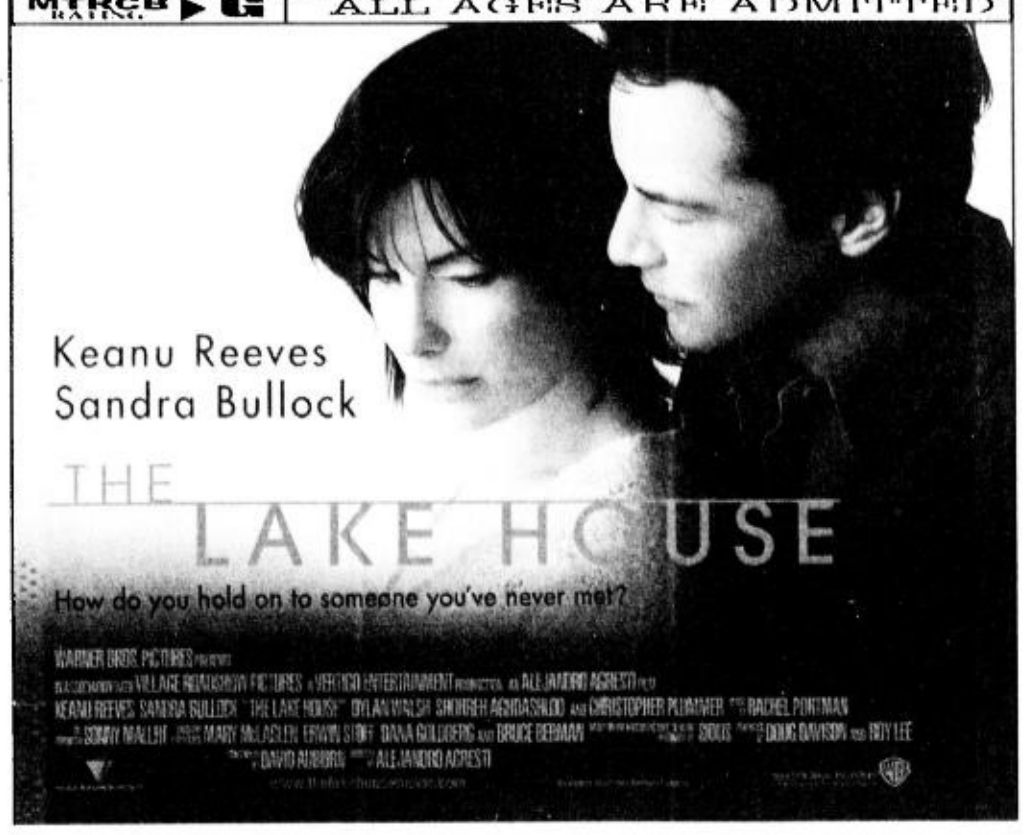

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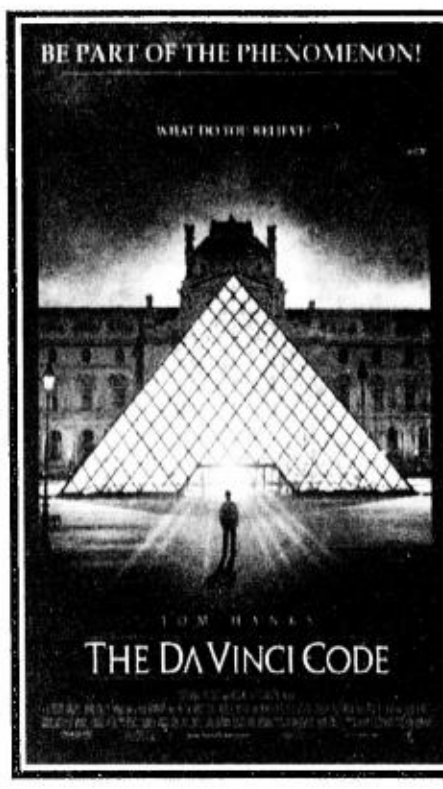

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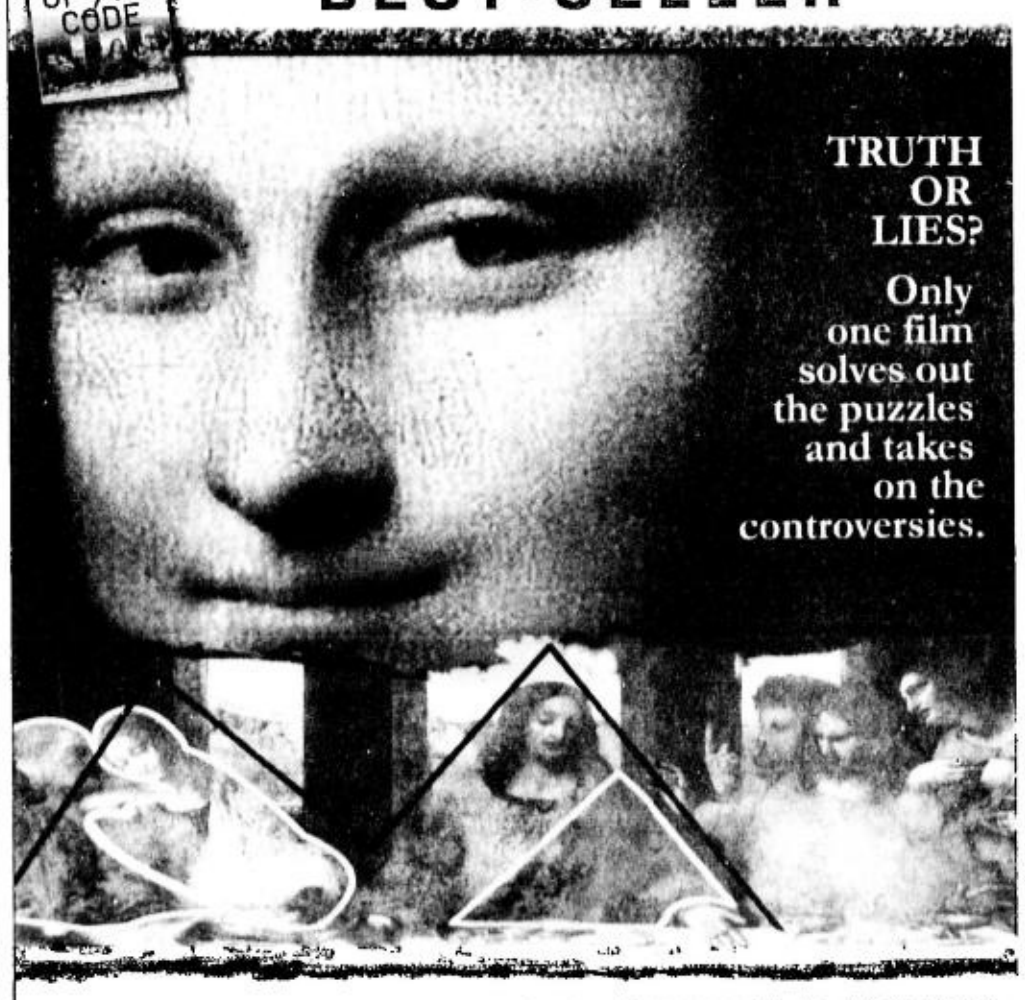

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SECRETS OF THE CODE

Echo makes big move

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

IT'S OFFICIAL.

Jericho Rosales has joined Manila Genesis "to pursue his music career," according to Angeli Pangilinan and Gina Martinez, who run the entertainment and management company.

Panglinan said Rosales' management contract with Star Magic, ABS-CBN's talent center, expired on April 24.

Rosales joined Star Magic in 1997.

The talent center gave no comment. Rikka Dylim, Star Magic PR manager, said, "We cannot confirm the negotiations." It was earlier speculated that the actor would join his girlfriend Heart Evangelista, who signed up with Genesis last January.

Martinez insisted, "They're not a package deal."

Pangilinan added, "We didn't pirate them."

"As of today, Heart and Echo are still with ABS-CBN, the network (as talents, not contract stars)," Martinez told INQUIRER Entertainment on Tuesday. "We are handling only his music career."

Rosales is promoting "Pacquiao the Movie," a co-production between FLT Films and Star Cinema, ABS-CBN's movie arm. Evangelista is hosting "Close Up to Fame 2" and is a veejay on MYX, ABS-CBN's music video channel.

The two have received other offers from the network, said Pangilinan. "I had a meeting with Cory Vidanes (senior vice president for TV production). She said they're thinking of a soap opera for them. I'm meeting with Malou Santos (Star Cinema managing director) for Heart."

According to Pangilinan, Rosales "is very grateful to ABS-CBN ... but wants to focus on his music [for now]. It's therapy for him."

Rosales and his band, Jeans, have inked a deal with EMI. Their debut album, "Loose Fit," is set for release all over Asia, Martinez said.

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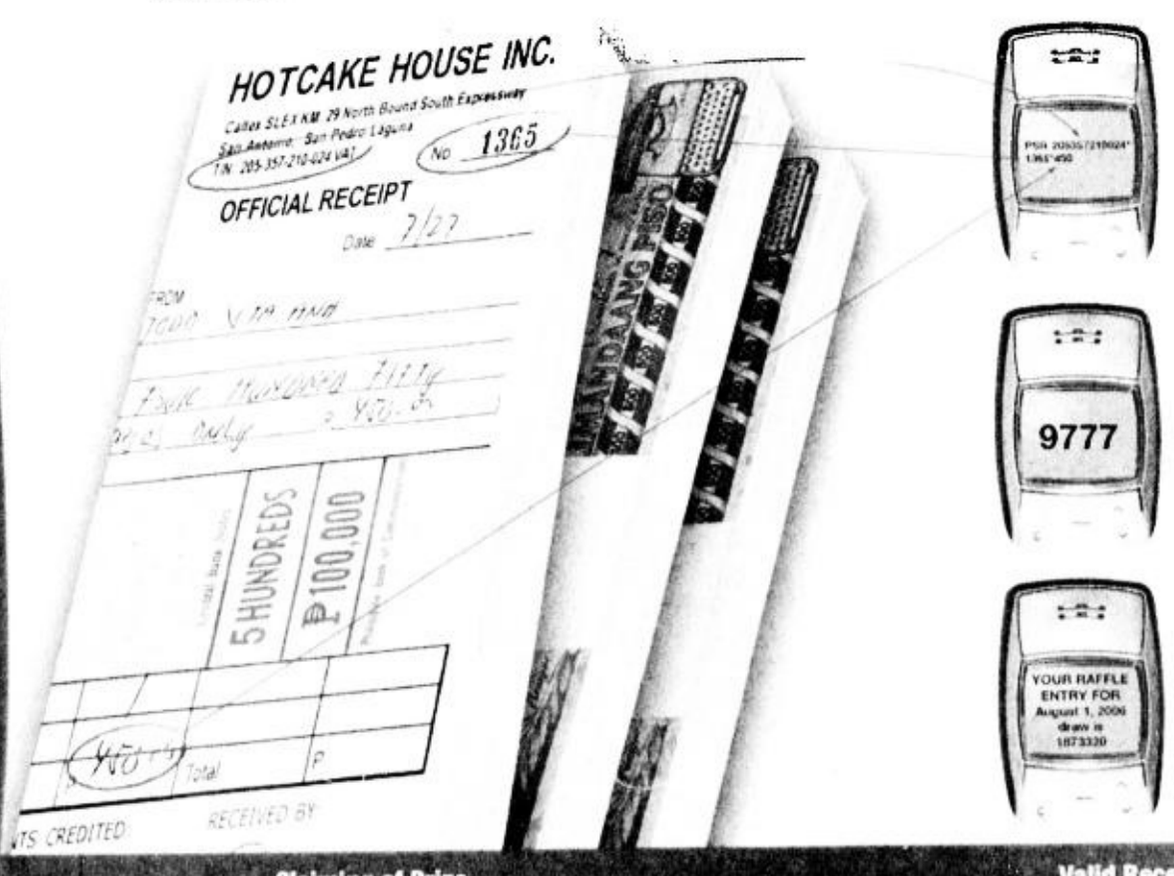

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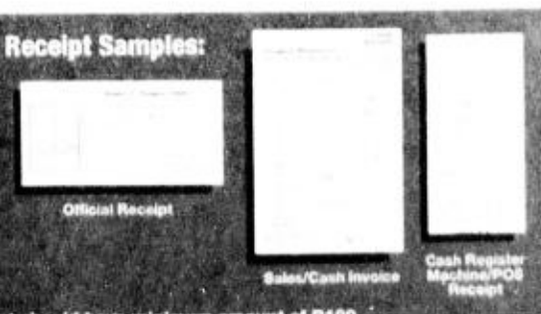

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GP

3 CARS
11:50, 2:30, 5:10, 7:50, 10:30
GP

4 LAKE HOUSE
11:20, 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00
GP

Julia eats humble pie

CHEER FACTOR

NEW YORK—HOLLYwood's most highly paid actress Julia Roberts was panned by critics in her Broadway stage debut this year, but she may have won a few friends in New York at Sunday night's Tony Awards by eating humble pie.

Roberts, whose performance in "Three Days of Rain" got scathing reviews, swallowed her pride at not being nominated for a Tony and made an appearance to present the award for best actor to Richard Griffiths of "The History Boys." She won a warm round of applause for acknowledging her lack of stage credentials: "I just want to take this opportunity to say that you people are insanely talented," the Oscar-winning actress told the audience full of Broadway stars.

Reuters

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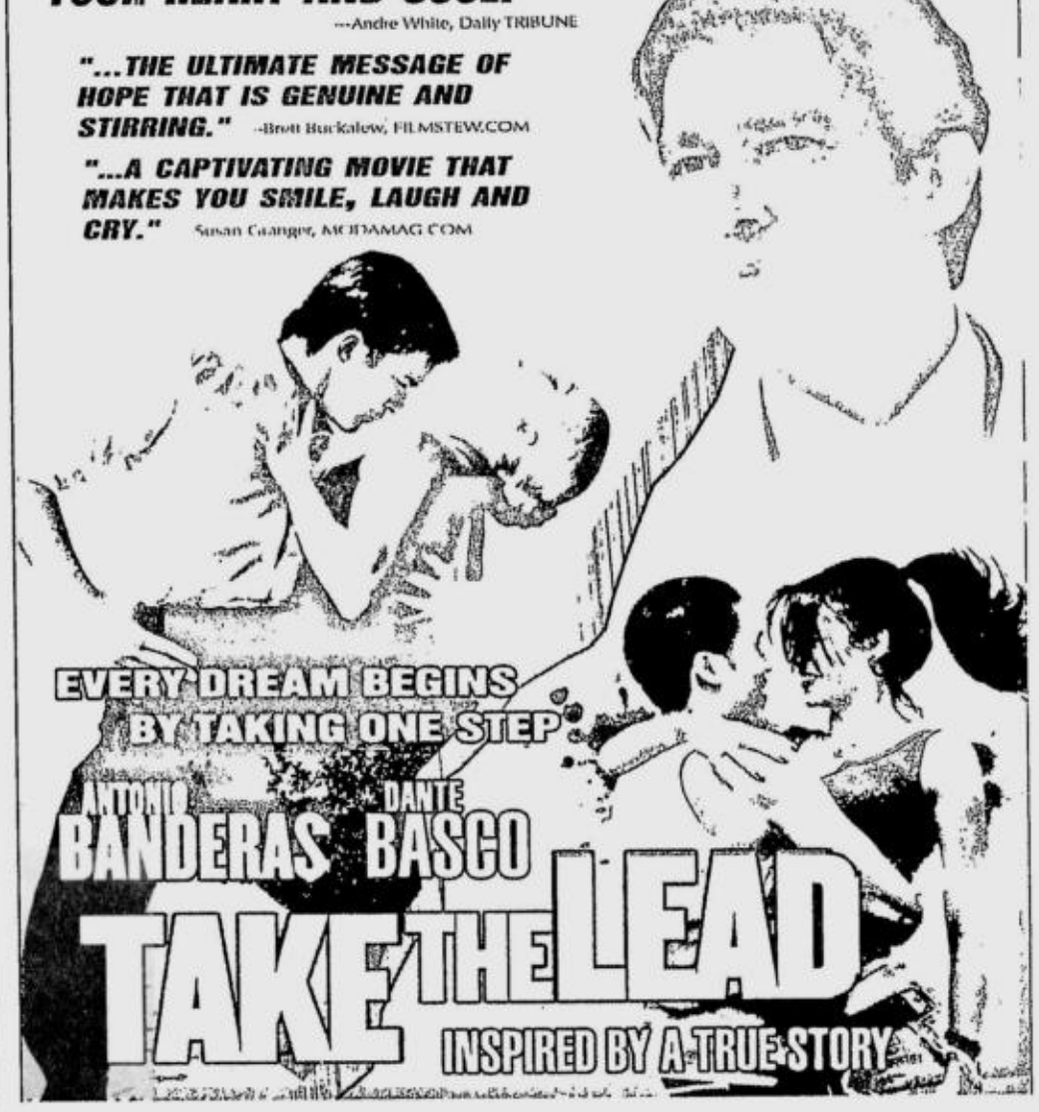

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G1 (GLORIETTA 1)	1 THE OMEN	2 X-MEN: THE LAST STAND	3 MANAY PO	4 ALL ABOUT LOVE
G4 (GLORIETTA 4)	1 CARS	2 THE OMEN	3 THX INSIDE MAN 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 FAILURE TO LAUNCH	5 TAKE THE LEAD	6 X-MEN: THE LAST STAND	7 THE DA VINCI CODE
GB1 (GREENBELT 1)	1 X-MEN: THE LAST STAND		2 THE OMEN	
GB3 (GREENBELT 3)	1 THX CARS 2:30, 5:10, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS		2 THX THE OMEN 2:00, 4:20, 6:40, 9:00, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	3 TAKE THE LEAD 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 X-MEN: THE LAST STAND 2:20, 4:30, 6:40, 8:50, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 INSIDE MAN 1:15, 3:45, 6:15, 8:45, 11:15 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC (ALABANG TOWN CENTER)	1 THX CARS		2 INSIDE MAN	
	3 THE OMEN	4 TAKE THE LEAD	5 X-MEN: THE LAST STAND	
ACC (AYALA CENTER CEBU)	1 THE OMEN	2 CARS	3 FAILURE TO LAUNCH	4 AQUAMARINE / X-MEN
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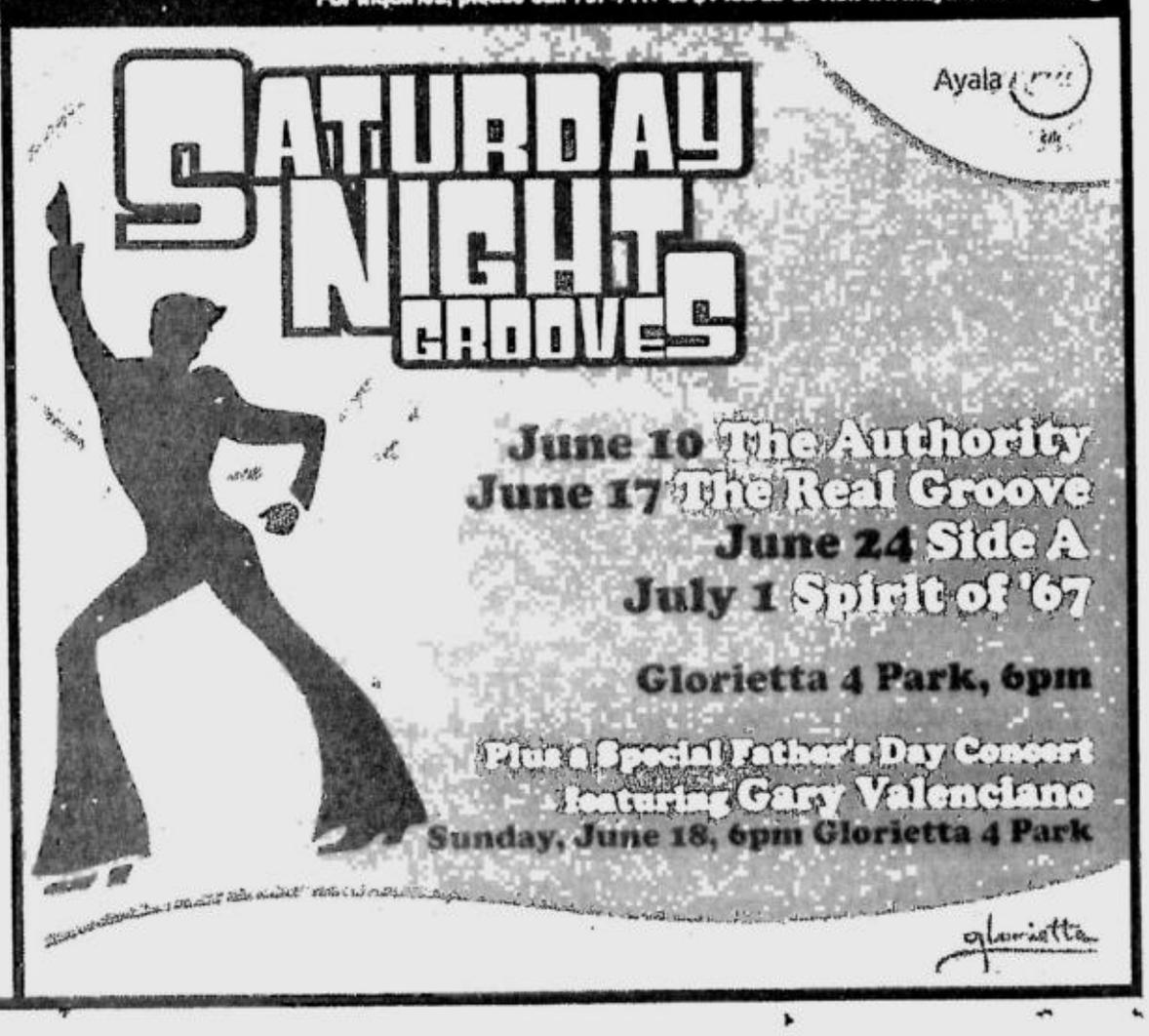

Alicia . . .

From page A2-6

But a "Kapamilya," she no longer is. She left ABS-CBN even before her contract expired, upon the advice of her husband, who wasn't too happy about her lack of exposure in the network. "I'm not burning my bridges though," she said. "If a good offer comes along, I'm willing to work with any channel."

When she comes back, Sam (her pet-name) will be Godiva Natural Skin Care-products' new endorser. I teased her, "Oh, my goddess! Are you going to have the biggest billboard on Edsa?"

Sam chuckled, "I wish!"

She's also set to shoot the digital film "Karma 2." Good karma will always surround this child-woman who stands by her husband through all his clan's squabbles.

Guess who

Guess who this flirty young actress is? She is relentlessly pursuing PBA player **Mac Cardona** of Talk n Text. But Mac neither talks to her nor texts her because he has his eyes on **Pauleen Luna**. As my source puts it, "Poor girl! She's already like a stalker. All the young actors linked to her agree that she's wild, and such a material girl!"

Perhaps the cager has been forewarned so he refuses to get his heart caged by her.

Clue: The young wild thing is a *mestiza*.

Happy people

At the presscon of "I Wanna Be Happy," everyone was teasing **Cherrie Pie Picache** and **Christian Vasquez** as the newest love team. After their hilarious team-up in the blockbuster "Manay Po," they portray husband and wife again in the Seiko movie.

Cherrie Pie ribbed Christian, "If I were unattached, I would court you!" The Ilonggo hunk couldn't stop blushing.

Still on the Seiko Films' offering, heard that **Alfred Vargas** and **Diana Zubiri** got even closer during the shooting. Production people told me that Diana often hitches a ride with Alfred. To his or her place?

HK expo

The Philippines is a participant in the Hong Kong International Tourism Expo, ongoing until June 18. A Filipino entertainment troupe composed of musicians, performers, fashion models and teenage singer **Olivia** (considered the latest singing sensation, and who happens to be the granddaughter of **Armida Siguion Reyna**) are now in HK to showcase Pinoy talent. At 19, Olivia has won several awards, including the Best Performance Award at the 2004 Russian Song Festival, where she bested contestants from 16 other countries.

(E-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com)

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1 THE DA VINCI CODE• THX
2 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
3 TAKE THE LEAD
4 GARFIELD 2: A TAIL OF TWO KITTIES
5 AMERICAN HAUNTING
6 LAKE HOUSE
7 TAKE THE LEAD
8 X0MEN 3
9 THE OMEN
10 CARS

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 AMERICAN HAUNTING
2 CARS
3 TAKE THE LEAD
4 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
5 LAKE HOUSE
6 X-MEN 3
7 GARFIELD 2 A TAIL OF TWO KITTIES

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1 AMERICAN HAUNTING
2 THE INSIDE MAN / THE DA VINCI CODE
3 LAKE HOUSE
4 GARFIELD 2: A TAIL OF TWO KITTIES
5 CARS
6 TAKE THE LEAD
7 THE OMEN
8 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO

NOVALICHES 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 X-MEN 3 / THE OMEN
2 THE DA VINCI CODE
3 GARFIELD 2
4 CARS
5 LAKE HOUSE
6 KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575

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2 MANAY PO
3 RESERVE
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24 Robinsons Place Dasmariñas (4:00-5:00PM)
25 Robinsons Place Sta. Rosa (4:00-5:00PM)

JULY 01 Robinsons Place Imus (4:00-5:00PM)
02 Robinsons Galleria (1:00-5:00PM)

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4 REINCARNATION
5 THE SENTINEL

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3 CARS
4 THE OMEN

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2 LAKE HOUSE
3 GARFIELD 2
4 CARS

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4 THE DA VINCI CODE
5 LAKE HOUSE
6 GARFIELD 2: A TAIL OF TWO KITTIES

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6 LAKE HOUSE

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6 REINCARNATION

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Garfield Megatour
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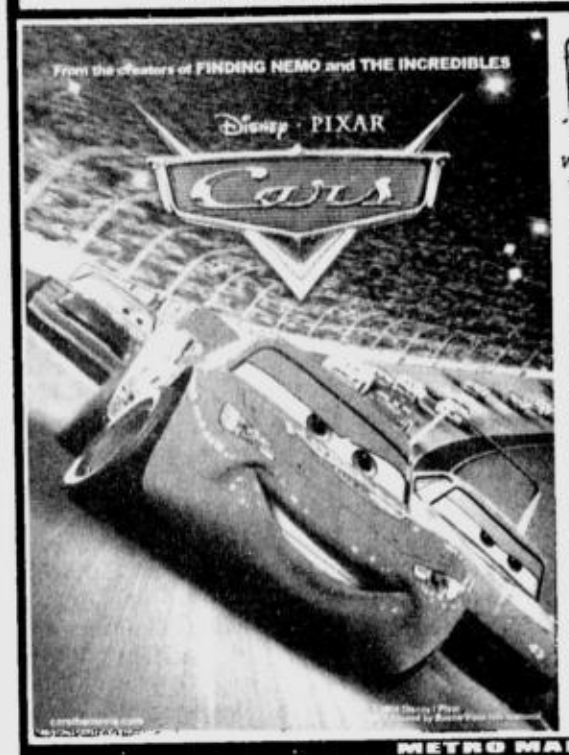
SM Megamall Bldg. A

96.3WROCK MEGAMALL

NOW SHOWING

MTRCB Rating G



WIN! Exclusive CARS vehicle sunshades and miniature CARS from Buena Vista International by identifying these friends in wheels from Radiator Springs:

She is the owner of Cozy Cone Motel and calls Lightning McQueen, "Stickers"
Answer:

The young hotshot rookie race car, whose favorite expression is "ka-chow!"
Answer:

His unique ability is to change a flat tire at 2.5 seconds flat
Answer:

The quiet doctor who runs the local medical clinic, err, mechanic shop
Answer:

Radiator Springs's resident hippie, who endorses the natural benefits of organic fuel
Answer:

Send in your answers together with your name, address, age and contact number at your nearest SM Cinema branch or e-mail to movieaddicts_smcinema@yahoo.com Ten (10) lucky winners will be chosen from all the entries received. Answers must all be correct in order to qualify. Multiple entries sent will only be counted as a single entry. Deadline for the submission of entries is on June 20, 2006.

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DIRECTOR'S CLUB
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CENTERSTAGE
RESERVED
THE OMEN
LAKE HOUSE
TAKE THE LEAD
CARS
GARFIELD 2
AMERICAN HAUNTING

PENINSULA
CINEMA 1
LAKE HOUSE
CINEMA 2
CARS

SM NORTH EDSA
XMEN III
LAKE HOUSE
CARS
THE OMEN
MANAY PO
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
GARFIELD 2
AMERICAN HAUNTING

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THE OMEN
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
LAKE HOUSE
GARFIELD 2

SM MEGAMALL
GARFIELD 2
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XMEN III
CARS
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LAKE HOUSE
M:I:III
TAKE THE LEAD
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
THE OMEN
ALL ABOUT LOVE
MANAY

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CARS
XMEN III
THE OMEN
LAKE HOUSE
AMERICAN HAUNTING
GARFIELD 2
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
TAKE THE LEAD
MANAY PO

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
INSIDE MAN
AMERICAN HAUNTING
XMEN III
MANAY PO
THE OMEN
GARFIELD 2
CARS
ALL ABOUT LOVE
M:I:III
LAKE HOUSE
TAKE THE LEAD

SM CITY DASMARIÑAS
CARS
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
BANDIDAS
THE OMEN

LAKE HOUSE
CARS
XMEN III
GARFIELD 2
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
THE OMEN
TAKE THE LEAD
MANAY PO
AMERICAN HAUNTING
ALL ABOUT LOVE

LAKE HOUSE
TAKE THE LEAD
M:I:III
XMEN III
GARFIELD 2
THE OMEN
AMERICAN HAUNTING
MANAY PO
INSIDE MAN
MANAY PO
ALL ABOUT LOVE
CARS

THE OMEN
LAKE HOUSE
GARFIELD 2
AMERICAN HAUNTING
CARS
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO

LAKE HOUSE
CARS
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
GARFIELD 2

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8:30 PM
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THE PREMIERE THEATER SM MALL OF ASIA
JULY 8, 2006
8:30 PM
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AMERICAN HAUNTING
ALL ABOUT LOVE
GARFIELD 2
LAKE HOUSE
XMEN III
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
THE OMEN
CARS

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XMEN III
LAKE HOUSE
THE OMEN
GARFIELD 2
SILENT HILL
ALL ABOUT LOVE
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
CARS

LUZON

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LAKE HOUSE
GARFIELD 2
CARS
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO

SM CITY MARILAO
CARS
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
MANAY PO
THE OMEN

SM CITY BATANGAS
ALL ABOUT LOVE
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
XMEN III
MANAY PO

SM CITY LUCENA
SENTINEL
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MANAY PO
ALL ABOUT LOVE

THE OMEN
LAKE HOUSE
CARS
MANAY PO
GARFIELD 2
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO

LAKE HOUSE
GARFIELD 2
ALL ABOUT LOVE
MANAY PO
CARS
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO

KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
XMEN III
TAKE THE LEAD
INSIDE MAN

CARS
XMEN III
THE OMEN
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO

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THE OMEN
LAKE HOUSE
CARS

AQUAMARINE
KAPAG TUMIBOK ANG PUSO
FAILURE TO LAUNCH
XMEN III

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ENTERTAINMENT

Hard criminals & other boob-tube booboos

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

HOST: WHAT KIND OF singer do you want to be—opera, pop, rock?

Guest: No, I want to be a ballader!

(You mean balladeer, don't you—dear?)

* * *

Host: Who are the people you have photographed for this exhibit?

Guest: Filipinos all over the Philippines where I've traveled, and also other people in the Asia.

(*Ay*, in the Asia!)

* * *

Host: What is your fantasy in the field of transportation?

Guest: Oh, I've always dreamed of going to the office in a horse.

(That sounds more like a nightmare to us...)

* * *

Host: As one of the most beautiful women in the country, *ano yung pinakamagandang katawan ng parte mo*?

(Don't answer that, please.)

* * *

Host: What can we expect to happen to our complexion after this treatment?

Guest: After this treatment, promise, you will be ready *na* to unveil into a new *ano* of your personal.

(—*Ano daw*?!)

* * *

Host: You must have had a hard time making this beautiful garden in this rocky place.

Guest: It wasn't easy, *pero pinapahirapan talaga namin*.

(*Isa ka pa*.)

* * *

Host: How do you feel about this award you've just received?

Guest: Of course, I'm very gateful to the sponsors, [illegible]

(*Ay*, he's very gateful daw...)

* * *

Host: What's the difference between living in your big house in Forbes Park, and moving to this condominium where you live now?

Guest: Well, it's simplier!

(*Ay*, it's simplier!)

* * *

Host: How did you react when you discovered that your husband was unfaithful to you?

Guest: I admit, I was shattered. For months, I didn't know what to do, I cried and cried—*ganoon katindi ang* emotional *ko*.

(Oh, wow.)

* * *

Host: Are you excited about the grand finals?

Guest: Oh, I'm very excited about the coming-up finals—championship night *yata yun*!

(*Ay*, championship night!)

* * *

Host: How was it for you, growing up in the slums?

Guest: It was a good learning experience to know how to survive in a place with some of the hardest criminals in the country.

(How hard do those criminals get?)

* * *

Host: We're about to end today's show—do you have anybody to thank?

Co-host: I'd like to thank my sponsors, Carousel Shoes, for my shoes.

(*Kulit*.)

* * *

Host: Do you have copies of your new album for us?

Guest: I'll give you. They're in my beefcase.

(—All mixed up with the beef? No, thanks.

On Star World

At 9 p.m. on June 18, Star World airs the Victoria's Secret Fashion Show, featuring some of the world's supermodels. It's also the last Victoria's Secret appearance for Tyra Banks, and the first post-pregnancy runway appearance for Heidi Klum.

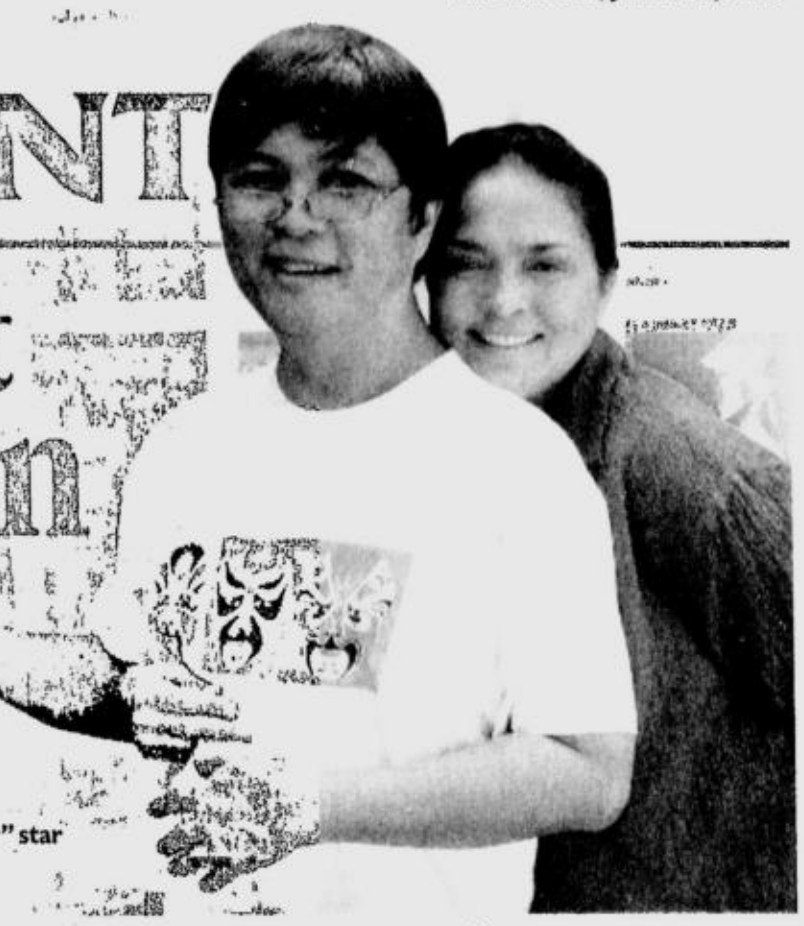
Plus: electrifying performances by Ricky Martin, Seal and Chris Botti. Replays on June 19 at 12:30 a.m. and 3 a.m.

On June 25 at 9 p.m., the special telecast is of Sports Illustrated's Swimsuit Model Search. The six-part series follows 12 selected finalists as they live and model together in Los Angeles to compete for the chance to appear in the best-selling issue of any magazine in the world.

The winner not only appears on the magazine's cover, but also wins a million-dollar contract from NEXT Model Management.

Replays on June 26 at 12:30 a.m. and 3 p.m.

Where it's at for Jeturian



JEFFREY Jeturian with his "Kubrador" star Gina Pareño

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

AWARD-WINNING FILMMAKER JEFFERY Jeturian constantly tries to maintain a balance between doing unusual films that strongly appeal to him and staying visible to mainstream audiences through his other projects. The 46-year-old director, whose diverse credits include "Pila Balde," "Tuhog," "Bridal Shower" and TV work, plus several documentaries, hopes to keep things interesting for himself and his audience by changing with the times and implementing techniques brought about by digital filmmaking.

By embracing the time- and money-saving advantages of digital technology, he did last year's "Bikini Open" (later transferred to 35 mm for a wider distribution), as well as his newest project, "Kubrador," which has been entered for competition in this month's Moscow Film Festival.

He is also among a few featured Asian filmmakers who will create exclusive clips using mobile phone cameras, to help generate interest for an annual talent search conducted by Discovery Networks Asia and Nokia. His works will be exhibited alongside those of directors Ekachai Uekrongtham ("Beautiful Boxer") and Kelvin Tong ("The Maid"), among others, at the Mobile FilmMakers 2006 Awards website. Jeturian talks about this 12-country competition, the local film industry, and his latest movie:

TAKE FIVE

Describe your involvement with the Discovery-Nokia competition.

They're asking me to submit one- to two-minute short films (for exhibition only). The theme is "My Discovery." It can be anything about one's own culture or country. So I thought of doing a scene in Manila, at a traffic intersection during a red light where we see, for instance, people polishing the shoes of jeepney passengers—for some change. I think that's very telling of our culture, of our economy.

How do you feel about this project?

It's something new and challenging for me—shooting a film with a phone—since I'm not very adept at using gadgets. It's something of an honor, too, because other Asian directors have been invited to help promote the contest, which is ongoing until the end of the month. Hopefully, from among this new generation of filmmakers, some will stand out.

How useful a tool is filmmaking for highlighting your advocacies?

The digital film "Kubrador" is about a jueteng collector. We follow three days in the person's life, and in that period of time, we see glimpses of Philippine society that aren't "hard sell." I'd like to do things that are not necessarily commercial. The fact that they're asking us to do a documentary here for the website, I think that's closer to the things that are non-mainstream, because you document real life scenes.

What about your TV work?

TV work is my bread and butter ... although TV culture doesn't always allow excellence in terms of craft. You're forced to finish a whole TV movie, for instance in two to three days.

Do you think the movie industry has recovered from the slump?

I think, slowly, it's recovering. In the past few months, many have done well at the box office. Right now, there's "Manay Po" and "All About Love." Problem is, only the big producers are making films.

And are audiences more discerning now?

I think so. I think the reason that moviegoers stayed away from local productions for a while is that producers under-estimated them. The moviegoers lost interest because they kept getting silly films. Now, at least there are more attempts to come up with intelligent scripts and filmgoers have gotten excited for Filipino films.

How has the digital wave changed old-school filmmaking?

I think the current generation of filmmakers is very lucky because (technology) opened new doors for them. I had to wait practically a lifetime before I was given a break. I did my first film in 1998, but I joined the industry in the mid-'80s. The training that we got using 35 mm is important for my generation; it helped discipline us. Of course the young ones will have their own learning experience.

How have actors changed these past few years?

I haven't worked long enough with anyone. [But I noticed that] veteran actors are more serious about their stuff, more cooperative, more dedicated. And they don't mind waiting on the set; they consider it as part of the package. The younger ones seem to have this "racket" mentality, hopping from one job to another, maybe wanting to strike while the iron is hot. I like working with Jeffrey Quizon, though. I like his attitude.

What is the best part about the ongoing evolution of filmmaking?

It's becoming less expensive. "Kubrador" cost us only about P3 million to 4 million, including transfer, whereas a regular film would cost somewhere between P10 million to P15 million.

What type of films do you prefer making?

Slices of life that show us as we really are—films that, at the same time, provoke thought. "Pila Balde," for instance, showed life in the slums. At the same time, we didn't dramatize it. I think that's how Filipinos are; we may be poor but we know how to enjoy life. That's what I really want to show—the Filipino spirit.

Alicia in wasteland

ASSUNTA de Rossi

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

ALICIA MAYER CAUSED QUITE A commotion at Embassy last Friday. She was cursing a lesbian bouncer named Ashley. Definitely not a picture of an "Alice in Wonderland."

Her best friend, **Maureen Larrazabal**, begged Alicia to calm down, according to an eyewitness, who also said Ashley slapped Alicia. Who provoked whom?

Heard that Alicia got pissed because the bouncer didn't allow one of her companions to enter. Soon enough, the police and Alicia's ex, **Joey Marquez**, arrived. Whatever triggered the fight, hope it will serve as a reminder to Embassy staff and guests to live up to the club's name by promoting diplomacy.

Joy of being Joey

Speaking of my *kumpareng* Joey, I just had an animated chat with him. We go a long way back, since his PBA days. It's an indescribable joy having such a low-maintenance yet highly rewarding friendship.

I asked Tsong how his hyperactive heart is these days. "It's under renovation," he quipped.

So his break-up with Alicia (Mayer) is already official? "Yup," he said. "*Ulirang ama muna ako* these days. *Hatid sundo ko mga anak ko sa* school. I've always told my girlfriends never compete with my kids."

The father in Joey has tamed the womanizer in him.

Oh, my goddess!

Assunta de Rossi just left for Italy to attend her sister's confirmation and also to visit her family who's based there. It's been 12 years since she last visited her dad's hometown. "I'm more afraid of my sister's *tampo* than my mom's (laughs) so I have to keep my promise to be around for her *kumpil*." Why isn't her hubby **Jules Ledesma** joining her? "It's my first time to travel alone. Jules and I will have our long overdue honeymoon, hopefully in Lake Como, before the year ends. For now it's bonding time with my family."

ALICIA/ A2-5

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 FRENCH FILM FESTIVAL

2 LAKE HOUSE MTRCB GP 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00

3 GARFIELD 2 MTRCB GP 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00

4 CARS MTRCB GP 11:40, 2:15, 4:50, 7:25, 10:00

PREMIERE THEATRE OMEN 666 MTRCB R-13 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice

Catch the Cineplex Special

Catch the French Film Festival 2006 at the Shang Cineplex from June 9-18! Celebrate French Spring as you enjoy a selection of critically acclaimed films. Le L' Esquive (12nn), Riviera (2:40 pm), Safe Conduct (6:20 pm) and New France (10 pm) at the Cinema 1. Tickets are at P50/ person.

Call 633-7851, loc. 171 or 633-2227 for more details.

Shangri-La Plaza

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1 OMEN 666 R13 TAKE THE LEAD PG13

2 GARFIELD 2 G 2:00,4:00,6:00,8:00,10:00

3 CARS G 2:20,5:00,7:40,10:20

THE INSIDE MAN PG13 2:00,4:40,7:20,10:00

AMERICAN HAUNTING

THE LAKE HOUSE PG13 1:45,3.55,6:05,8:15,10:25

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4 OMEN R13

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JUNE 16,17,23,24,30,2006	NINA ... in VERY MANILOW	9:00PM
JULY 8,2006	GLADYS GUEVARA	9:00PM
EVERY MONDAY	DANCE NIGHT	7:00PM
JUNE 16 ,17,23,24 ,2006	WERE STILL HOT "THE MUSICAL" FOR INQUIRIES PLS CALL 722-4532 LOC 116	8:00PM

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¥114.96 = $1
As of 5 p.m., June 14, 2006

GOLD: $567.60-568.10 per ounce Hong Kong, June 14, 2006

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BUSINESS

Editor Raul O. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Corrie S. Narisma

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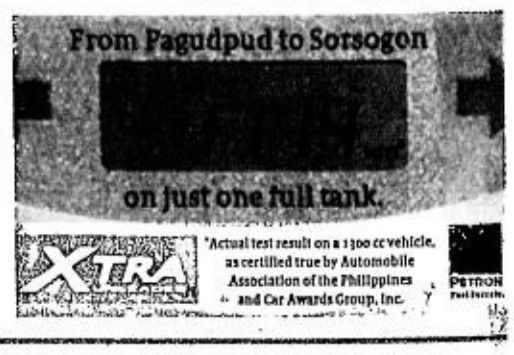


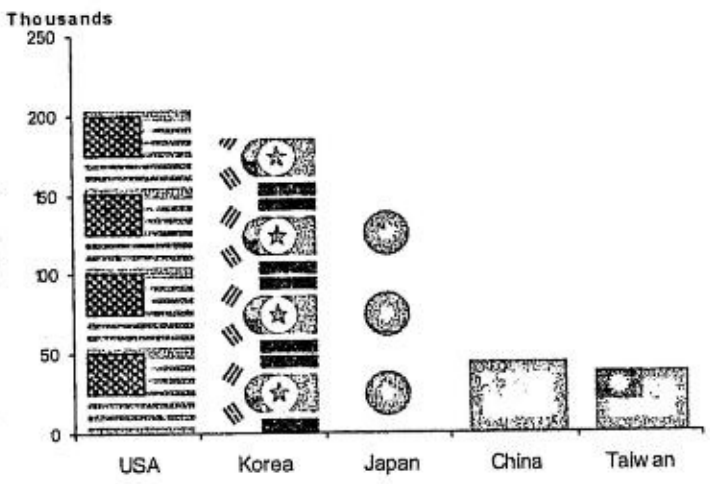
RP out to counter Fed rate hike

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

US tops RP visitors list (January to April 2006)

Of the more than 965,000 foreign nationals registered as visitors to the country in the first four months of 2006, 21 percent or 202,880 came from the United States of America. The other countries with the most number of nationals visiting the country were Korea, Japan, China and Taiwan.



Source: Department of Tourism

Kate V. Pedroso PDI Research

BSP likely to increase key policy rates to fend off pressures on peso

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Doris C. Dumlao and Elizabeth L. Sanchez

MALACAÑANG YESTERDAY warned that an impending hike in key US interest rates, which has already caused a sell-off in financial markets worldwide, could pose a serious threat to the Philippine economy.

"When you look at regional markets, there are countries whose economies are stronger than ours and they are suffering as well from the US rate hikes," said Trade and Industry Secretary Peter Favila. "It's a serious threat.

"Even in my banking days, I've seen that whenever the US sneezes, the whole world catches a cold."

Favila said the economic managers have talked informally with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to map out a game plan on how the Philippines could weather the adverse effect of higher US interest rates.

"I talked to (BSP) Governor Tetangco and he said that, given our own reserves, we should be able to isolate ourselves," Favila said. "But we still can't say we will not be affected."

The peso yesterday retreated to a new year-low level of 53.48 against the US dollar in morning trade before it closed much stronger at 53.20 as offshore investors grabbed bargain-hunting opportunities in the volatile regional currency markets.

At the end of the day, the local currency even gained 13 centavos to close near the intra-day high of 53.15, stronger than Tuesday's finish of 53.33 as a rebound in Japanese stocks boosted the yen and other regional currencies in afternoon trade.

Local investors are now speculating that the Bangko Sentral may soon hike key interest rates to fend off pressures on the peso, according to analysts.

Share prices closed down 2.51 percent Wednesday, hitting a four-month low after further losses on Wall Street, dealers said.

The benchmark Philippine Stock Exchange

RP OUT/ B4

Public sector debt hit P5.1T as of end-2005

By Michelle V. Remo

THE COUNTRY'S OUTSTANDING PUBLIC sector debt (OPSD) reached P5.1 trillion as of end-2005, down 4.4 percent from P5.3 trillion in 2004.

It was the first time in seven years that the public sector debt fell below 100 percent of gross domestic product.

OPSD includes the liabilities of the national government, local government units and state-owned firms.

Data from the Department of Finance showed that the OPSD for 2005 was equivalent to 93.4 percent of GDP for that year.

The last time the country registered an OPSD below 100 of GDP was in 1998, when the ratio stood at 94.6 percent.

The DOF said that of the total debt for 2005, foreign liabilities accounted for the bigger share of P3.3 million.

Non-financial public sector debt includes liabilities of the national government (P3.89 trillion) and government-owned and -controlled corporations or GOCCs (P1.6 trillion), and social security institutions (SSIs).

Financial public sector debt, on the other hand, includes liabilities of government financial institutions like the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) and Land Bank of the Philippines.

Financial public sector debt likewise includes intra-sector borrowings, meaning debt of one GFI to another.

DOF data showed that the national government's debt of P3.89 trillion as of end-2005 was 2 percent higher than the 2004 level, while the P1.6-trillion debt of GOCCs was 1.2 percent higher year-on-year.

The increase in the debts of the national government was attributed to its annual budget deficit, resulting from weak revenue collections.

The DOF said in a statement that the decrease in the OPSD had to do partly with the decline in the debt of the financial sector.

Consumer outlook improving, says Bangko Sentral

FILIPINOS ARE A BIT MORE UPBEAT this quarter due to improved prospects on household earnings and employment conditions, according to the latest consumer expectations survey of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

The CES survey for the second quarter—which the BSP conducted on April 1-7 covering 2,590 sample households in the National Capital Region—showed a more favorable consumer outlook for this quarter and next, as well as for the next 12 months.

Households that remained pessimistic on the economic and financial conditions for this quarter and the next still outnumber those with rosy outlook, based on the diffusion indices, which hit negative 38.7 percent and negative 5.6 percent, respectively. But the resulting diffusion index (DI) represented an improvement from the 40.7 percent and 8.5 percent posted in the previous survey.

The DI is computed as the percentage share of respondents with a positive view less those of respondents with a negative view. A negative DI, thus, indicates an unfavorable view by the majority when measuring sentiment.

"The current and next-quarter DIs marked the third straight quarterly rise beginning in the fourth quarter of 2005 and, so far, the best results since the start of the CES in the third quarter of 2004," BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said in a statement yesterday.

"However, since the DIs have remained negative, the increasing trend indicated that the edge of the pessimists over the optimists has been narrowing. This was reinforced by the rising trend in the one-year ahead consumer outlook."

The respondents' outlook for the next 12 months marked a turnaround, from negative 7.7 percent a quarter ago to positive 3.6 percent.

An improving outlook was noted across all income levels based on three benchmarks—family financial

CONSUMER/ B4

Kiss dismissed

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

OUR TOKEN ATTEMPT AT "GOOD GOVERnance," the PCGG, got another slap on its kissable face in the case of Trans Middle East (TME), a minority stockholder of the famous Equitable PCI Bank.

This time it came from the Sandiganbayan, which dismissed yesterday the 3-year-old PCGG motion for the Sandiganbayan to reconsider an earlier decision, in effect lifting the PCGG sequestration of TME shares.

For the past 20 years, TME has been battling the PCGG over that 8-percent interest in EPCIB. The PCGG sequestered the shares in 1986. Only 17 years later in 2003, the Sandiganbayan ruled that the sequestration was illegal.

The PCGG filed a motion for reconsideration. Hanging for three years, the motion suddenly sprang back to life recently in connection with the EPCIB annual stockholders meeting.

The Sandiganbayan merely RE-imposed a 12-year-old Supreme Court-issued TRO. In effect, the Sandiganbayan decision prevented TME from voting its shares during the meeting.

As a result, EPCIB booted out the TME representative to the board, a young lawyer named Martin Romualdez, which probably made the SM group and its allies happy—but only for three weeks.

Romualdez has been quite vocal in fighting the celebrated takeover of EPCIB by the SM group's Tessie Sy, the daughter of mall operator Henry Sy, who reportedly was aided by two "godfathers" rather close to Malacañang.

But in a strongly worded ruling, the Supreme Court chastised the Sandiganbayan for resurrecting the TRO, saying that the Sandiganbayan should have decided on the PCGG motion instead—you know, either grant it or dismiss it.

Yesterday, the Sandiganbayan decided to stand pat on its earlier decision that the PCGG sequestration was illegal. The court threw out the PCGG arguments in the motion as mere rehash or irrelevant.

And so it seems that, in her plan to take over EPCIB for a song, Tessie Sy just lost the PCGG card. To think that, based on the Supreme Court ruling, the PCGG would even lie for Tessie Sy and company.

Given special mention in the Supreme Court ruling on the TME case was former PCGG Deputy Commissioner Wiliam Dichoso, who wrote to EPCIB that the Sandiganbayan issued a TRO to stop TME from voting on its shares.

But the Sandiganbayan, as the Supreme Court ruling noted, never issued such a TRO.

The EPCIB chair, none other than SSS president Corazon de la Paz, also a known ally of Tessie Sy, plus the SM group-installed corporate secretary Sabino Acut, took Dichoso's word as gospel truth. Rather convenient!

* * *

CAN YOU believe it? The Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) denied that the controversial "Resolution 21" was meant to open a window for the YNN consortium and Meralco to sign a sweetheart deal without the benefit of public bidding. Really?

The resolution suspended the ERC rule that, for their "supply contracts" with power plants (like YNN consortium's Masinloc), power distributors (like Meralco) should conduct public bidding.

Okay—so those who believe the ERC, please raise your toenails. Come on, right this minute, top honchos of Meralco are rushing an agreement with YNN. Why the hurry? To think, there is even an oversupply of power in the Luzon grid.

Word went around that this cute administration was pressuring Meralco to sign the contract with YNN.

But why didn't the government ask Meralco to give the contract before the bidding for the Masinloc plant? That way, the government-owned PSALM would have attracted more bidders.

Now, it must settle for this YNN consortium, which does not even have the financial capability. It has yet to pay the government for the Masinloc plant—almost two years after the bidding.

And so if the contract between Meralco and YNN suddenly springs up in the near future, the ERC can deny everything until it is blue in the face, but the public will know who to blame for another rotten deal.

* * *

Business is bracing itself up for the forthcoming BIR assault. And the BIR will go after everybody. I mean, the assault will not be directed just at big-time tax evaders.

For instance, during the time of the man named Band ... Wrist Band ... the BIR charged this insurance company for unpaid documentary stamp tax of about P800 million. Up to now, nothing has happened to the case.

Anyway, apparently to force the BIR to meet its collection target this year, and thus make the country look good enough for this cute administration to bury us into more foreign debts, the Palace is brandishing the "attrition law."

Under the law, this cute administration has the power to remove BIR personnel if they do not meet collection targets. No questions asked!

Such an absolute power over BIR personnel—and their families—can tempt even the saints in this cute administration, if any, to apply favoritism under our very own "padrino" system.

Who will this cute administration axe, for instance, when many, if not all, BIR offices fail to meet their targets, which is precisely the likely scenario this year?

Already, from what I hear, a lot of the BIR field officers can hardly meet their targets. They must collect 30 to 40 percent higher than last year's collection.

Now, collection targets of the BIR are mere guesswork. Under the "attrition law," failure to meet the targets can cost BIR personnel their jobs—as punishment. It follows that the law relies on guesswork to penalize people. Congratulations to Congress!

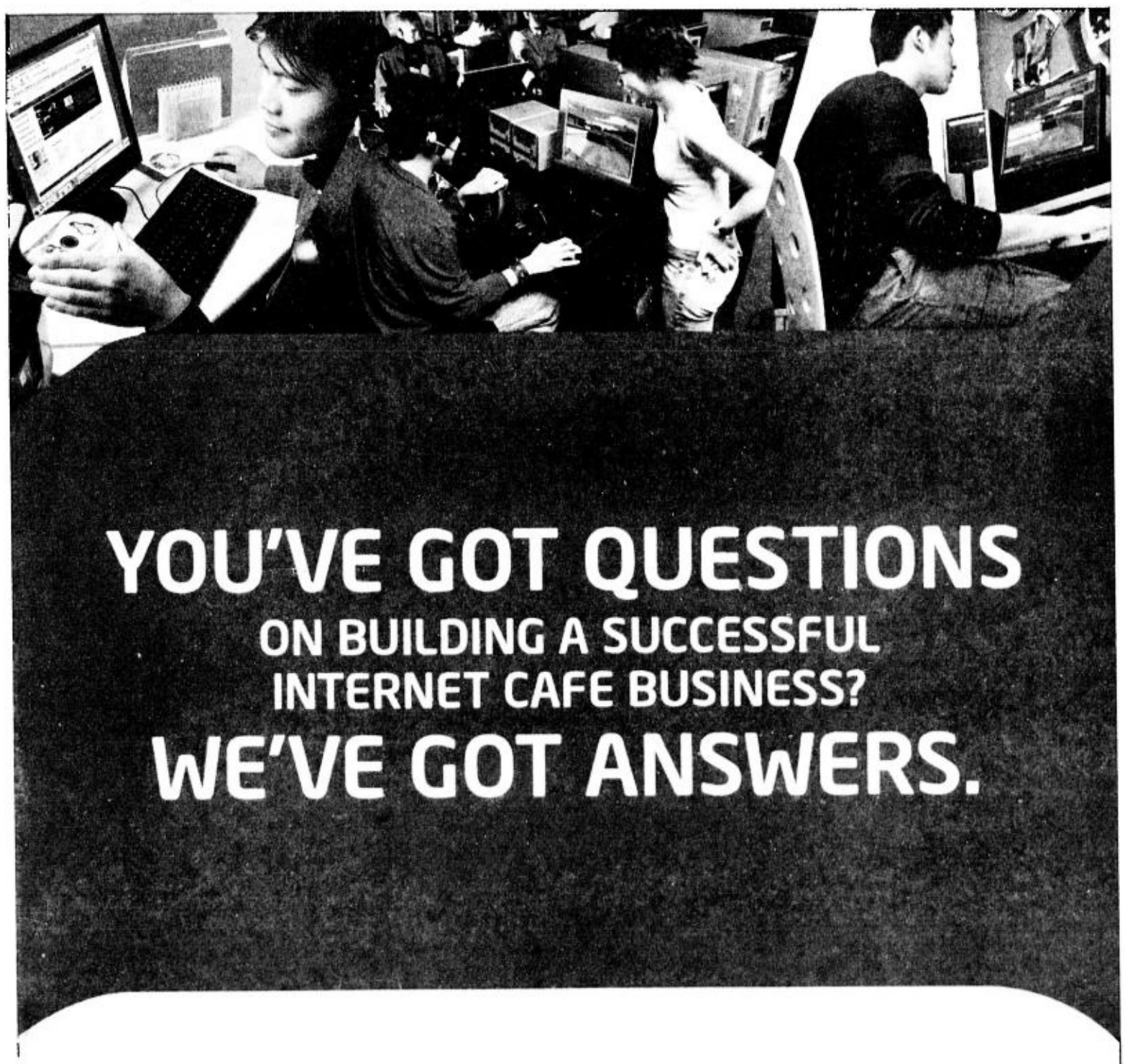
Surely, the BIR people want to hold on to their jobs, unless they are dying to send their families out into the streets. Believe me, between you, the taxpayer, and their families, they will gladly run after you—even to point of harassment.

Some people in business, including the professionals, are already feeling it.

* * *

A GOOD soul told us that our womanizing insurance guy, aside from failing to pay for the insurance claims of an influential family for its helicopter, has also yet to settle the multi-million-peso 15-year-old claim of a big shipping company.

It seems that the BIR also cannot collect some P800 million in documentary stamp tax from his insurance company. From what I heard, the case was swept under the BIR table during the time of Wrist Band. A revenue deputy commissioner under BIR chief Guillermo Parayno again put it at the bottom of the files. Lucky guy!



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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of June 14, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	31	32.5	31	32.5	166,300
Bank of the Phil. Islands	46.5	47	46.5	46.5	1,585,400
China Banking Corp.	870	870	860	860	1,540
Citystate Savings Bank	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5	300
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.38	0.39	0.38	0.38	1,820,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	71.5	72	71.5	72	179,700
International Exch. Bank	41	41	41	41	43,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31	31.5	29	30.5	2,686,300
Philippine National Bank	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	11,000
Phil. Savings Bank	39	39.5	39	39.5	5,600
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	17	17	17	17	27,100
Security Bank Corp.	49	49	49	49	1,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	43	43	41	43	20,800
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
First Metro Invest. Corp.	31.5	31.5	31.5	31.5	5,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1720	1720	1680	1680	240
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99	410,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2120	2130	2120	2130	210
Ivantage Corp.	1.1	1.14	1.08	1.14	5,583,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	43	44.5	43	44.5	278,200
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	41.5	42	41.5	42	475,400
Manila Electric Co. A	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	24,600
Manila Electric Co. B	20.5	20.75	20.25	20.5	537,800
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.9	7	6.9	6.9	2,076,000
Petron Corp.	3.5	3.5	3.35	3.45	13,029,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.76	1.76	1.76	1.76	19,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	120,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3	3	3	3	1,000
CADP Group Corp.	2.22	2.22	2.22	2.22	1,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	23	23	23	23	33,500
Jollibee Foods Corp.	33.5	33.5	31.5	31.5	507,000
Pancake House Inc.	4	4	4	4	30,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	2.6	2.6	2.55	2.55	1,664,000
San Miguel Corp. A	63	64	63	64	100,100
San Miguel Corp. B	70	70.5	70	70.5	92,600
Universal Robina Corp.	18.75	18.75	18.75	18.75	694,900
Vitarich Corp.	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215	300,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.25	1,550,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.08	1.14	1.08	1.12	1,344,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.45	4.55	4.45	4.55	533,000
Republic Cement Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.24	1.26	671,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Global Equities Inc.	0.0675	0.07	0.0675	0.07	3,700,000
Stenel Manufacturing	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	160,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	1,000,000
Ayala Corp.	340	350	340	347.5	251,160
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.46	0.46	0.45	0.45	560,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5.1	5.2	5.1	5.1	215,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5	500
Ajo Net Holdings Inc.	0.022	0.022	0.022	0.022	12,200,000
A. Soriano Corp.	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.55	6,814,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	2,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.9	0.9	0.89	0.89	690,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	1.22	1.22	1.22	1.22	10,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	9.7	9.7	9.7	9.7	15,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.98	0.99	0.98	0.99	3,430,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.6	436,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	5.7	6	5.7	6	107,000
Pacifica	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	1,000,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.155	0.155	2,600,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.54	1.54	1.54	1.54	1,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	700,000
SM Investments Corp.	207	211	207	209	96,490
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.61	0.61	0.6	0.6	200,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.09	0.09	0.085	0.085	1,700,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	11.25	11.75	11	11.5	12,423,700
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.3	0.3	170,000
Belle Corp.	0.99	0.99	0.95	0.97	6,940,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	1.8	2.06	1.8	1.98	1,119,000
C&P Homes Inc.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	103,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	700,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.57	0.57	0.56	0.57	5,410,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.3	1.32	1.3	1.32	6,082,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04	5,000
Interport Res.	0.005	0.0065	0.005	0.0065	15,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	5,000,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	600,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	200,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.38	1.44	1.36	1.4	17,010,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.195	0.2	3,850,000
Polar Property Holdings	2.38	2.5	2.38	2.5	26,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	10	10	9.8	9.9	478,000
SM Development Corp.	1.52	1.52	1.48	1.48	36,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7	7	6.9	6.9	10,765,000
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	13.5	14	13.5	14	60,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.14	1.14	1.12	1.14	2,476,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	880	885	870	880	11,050
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.1	3.2	3.1	3.2	3,052,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1820	1820	1770	1775	227,980
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.155	0.155	0.155	0.155	100,000
Imperial Res.	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	9,100,000
Ionics Inc.	2	2.1	1.98	2.02	612,000
Transpacific Broadband	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	100,000
Philweb Corp.	0.028	0.029	0.027	0.029	94,100,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	2.55	2.55	2.5	2.55	382,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	13.25	13.25	12.5	12.5	1,419,100
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.97	0.97	0.97	0.97	300,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	4.45	4.45	4.45	4.45	730,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.34	1.34	1.34	1.34	67,000
Manila Jockey Club	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	12,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	50,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.57	0.57	0.57	0.57	300,000
EDUCATION					
Ipeople Inc.	3	3.1	3	3	102,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	1.86	1.86	1.86	1.86	32,000
Paxys Inc.	9.9	9.9	9.5	9.7	225,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.007	0.0075	0.007	0.0075	76,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	5.9	5.9	5.6	5.6	1,474,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.24	0.25	0.235	0.25	7,480,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	1,180,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.018	0.019	0.017	0.019	218,100,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.02	0.021	0.02	0.021	213,700,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	2.7	2.8	2.65	2.7	12,661,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	2.75	2.85	2.7	2.75	14,966,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	383,300
OIL					
Basic Consolidated, Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.23	0.24	1,920,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0085	0.0085	0.008	0.0085	167,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	35,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99	40,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.98	0.98	0.97	0.97	480,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	14.75	15.25	14.5	15	367,000
PREFERRED					
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	200
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp.(Pdr)	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	80,000

DISCLOSURES

RFM CORP. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on July 26, 10:30 a.m. at the auditorium of the RFM Corporate Center in Mandaluyong City.

* * *

ANSCOR Consolidated Corp. has disclosed the purchase of 500,000 shares from A. Soriano Corp. at P3.50 per share. Anscor Consolidated Corp. is a wholly owned subsidiary of A. Soriano Corp.

* * *

ANTONIO O. Cojuangco, Helen Y. Dee, Ray C. Espinosa, Tatsu Kono, Napoleon L. Nazareno, Manuel V. Pangilinan, Corazon S. de la Paz, Albert F. del Rosario and Shigeru Yoshida were elected directors of the **Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.** Elected independent directors are Bienvenido F. Nebres, Oscar S. Reyes, Pedro E. Roxas and Alfred V. Ty.

* * *

CROWN Equities Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on July 28, 4 p.m. at the Makati Sports Club, Salcedo Village, Makati City. ***Compiled by Kate Pedroso, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

June 14, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.797512	1.000000	53.3090
Japan	Yen	0.006914	0.008669	0.4621
United Kingdom	Pound	1.461600	1.832700	97.6994
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.102742	0.128828	6.8677
Switzerland	Franc	0.643570	0.806972	43.0189
Canada	Dollar	0.716221	0.898069	47.8752
Singapore	Dollar	0.499069	0.625782	33.3598
Australia	Dollar	0.590618	0.740576	39.4794
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.116539	2.653928	141.4782
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.212641	0.266631	14.2138
Brunei	Dollar	0.497512	0.623830	33.2558
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000084	0.000105	0.0056
Thailand	Baht	0.020726	0.025988	1.3854
UAE	Dirham	0.217140	0.272272	14.5145
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.253900	66.8442
Argentina	Peso	0.258932	0.324675	17.3081
Brazil	Real	0.347500	0.435730	23.2283
Denmark	Kroner	0.134185	0.168254	8.9695
India	Rupee	0.017409	0.021829	1.1637
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.216539	0.271518	14.4744
Mexico	New Peso	0.069463	0.087100	4.6432
New Zealand	Dollar	0.496459	0.622510	33.1854
Norway	Kroner	0.127804	0.160254	8.5430
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013270	0.016639	0.8870
South Africa	Rand	0.116609	0.146216	7.7946
Korea	Won	0.000829	0.001040	0.0554
Sweden	Kroner	0.108033	0.135463	7.2214
Syria	Pound	0.015363	0.019264	1.0269
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024448	0.030655	1.6342

Gov't to float $1B in bonds

By Michelle V. Remo

FINANCE SECRETARY MARgarito Teves said the government might float about $1 billion worth of bonds by September to complete its foreign financing requirement for the year.

The government set a programmed foreign commercial borrowing of $3.1 billion this year.

The government already raised about $2.2 billion through a bond float in January.

The finance chief said the government could not issue bonds yet in the international market due to unfavorable conditions.

Authorities said interest rates for bonds of emerging economies were rising in the foreign market because of prospects of an increase in US interest rate.

An increase in US interest rate makes securities issued by emerging economies like the Philippines less attractive, so investors seek higher risk premiums.

This makes it more expensive for the Philippines to issue debt paper in the foreign market.

Teves said the government would thus likely issue bonds by September, the latest, hoping the market would be settled by then.

"We are trying to see favorable rates. We will be sticking to our borrowing program, and the next borrowing will be the last one for the year," Teves said.

Fair review of incentives sought

Mining firms react to planned DENR study on grant of perks

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE LOCAL MINING INDUSTRY is seeking a balanced and fair review of incentives granted to local mining companies.

The industry made the call in reaction to the plan of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources to commission a study that will recommend ways to integrate and rationalize the granting of investment incentives to mining firms.

The DENR's final report on Lafayette Mining Philippines Inc. indicated that there may have been "excessive incentives" given to mining firms that were unfavorable to the Philippine government.

Lafayette Mining Philippines obtained an economic zone status from the Philippine Economic Zone Authority and has been exempted from corporate and excise taxes for five years.

The Chamber of Mines of the Philippines, which groups medium and large-scale mining firms, on the other hand, said the fiscal incentives were necessary to attract foreign investors.

"The government must be careful in this aspect because the fiscal regime is part of what makes it attractive to investors," Chamber of Mines president Benjamin Philip G. Romualdez said in an interview.

The independent organization Philippine Mine Safety and Environment Association (PMSEA), on the other hand, said that there might be a need to review the incentives granted to mining companies to avoid the confusion with the tax credits given by the national and provincial and municipal governments.

PMSEA president Ernesto C. Rodriguez said in a separate interview that the incentives and the tax requirements by local government units must be harmonized.

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Bankable banks of Mindanao

MINDANAWORLD

Joji Ilagan-Bian

WHEN WE ASSESS THE ECOnomic performance of Mindanao, the health of its banking sector is one of the best indicators of growth.

Put simply, more banks means more business.

Over the last three years, the Mindanao banking sector has displayed a significant increase in the number of banking offices.

From the report generated by the Mindanao Economic Development Council (Medco), there was a 2-percent increase in the number of banks operating in Mindanao, from 877 in 2003 to 896 in 2004.

Data as of 2004 showed that Region 13 or Caraga posted the biggest increase in the number of offices, with seven more bank branches put up. Region 11 had four, and Regions 9 and 12 had three new banks. Region 10 had two additional banks, while the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao is still waiting for its first.

From 2003 to 2004, the number of quasi-banks in Mindanao, mainly pawnshops, increased by 8.5 percent with 1,713 institutions registered with Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) as against 1,578 in 2003.

Pawnshops provide an alternative source of funds for the farmers and the small businessmen.

In the 2004 regional distribution report released by the BSP, Region 11, which is the center of trade and services in Mindanao, has the most number of quasi-banks with 486 financial institutions, comprised mostly of pawnshops.

With the increase in the number of banks, the consolidated loan portfolio of Mindanao banks also increased to P61.645 billion in 2004 from P60.817 billion in 2003. Northern Mindanao or Region 10, accounted for P19.632 billion, followed by Southern Mindanao or Region 11 at P16.904 billion and the lowest at P3.4 billion at Caraga.

Most of the loans were provided by commercial banks, accounting for 71 percent. But the rural banks' portfolio more than doubled from 2003 and 2004, as the majority of the farmers in Mindanao rely on rural banks for their capital needs.

The increase in the rural banks' loan portfolio could also be attributed to the growing microfinance services given to small and medium scale entrepreneurs.

Based on 2005 reports from the Rural Bankers Association of the Philippines, out of the 428 towns and cities in Mindanao, there are 286 RB offices servicing the island.

Savings deposits in commercial, thrift and rural banks increased from P337.46 billion in 2003 to P354.26 billion, which is good news for us because savings again indicates that the agriculture sector is doing well.

The top savers were Region 10 with a P4.48-billion increase, closely followed by Region 11 with a P4.46 billion, and lastly Region 9 with P2.47 billion.

The increase in deposits may also be due to the increased awareness of the market on the importance of saving for the future and also the robust economic activities in the communities where the banks operate.

Microfinance has helped many banks grow their assets and loan portfolio. This indicates the microentrepreneurs' growing confidence in getting access to microfinance programs as a means to start a small business or expand their operations.

There are now over 15,000 SMEs present in Mindanao who get capital from banks.

To give you a better picture, let's take a look at how rural banks are strengthening their operations and are likewise strengthening the financial condition of the SMEs through micro-credit systems.

From the August 2003 report filed by the USAID-funded project Microenterprise Access to Banking Services or MABS, micro-loan portfolio of 37 MABS participating banks nationwide "surged to P291.65 million in August 2003, up from P282 million in the previous month. The number of micro-borrowers also swelled from 32,306 in September 2002 to 43,226 at the end of August. Micro-savings deposits also rose from P205.4 million in July to P228.98 million in August."

The microfinance systems of banks and other financial institutions are developing new Filipino entrepreneurs and are helping marginalized sectors in the community shape their financial future. This is largely benefiting the poverty-stricken Mindanao regions.

(Joji Ilagan Bian is an advocate for Mindanao; chair, Mindanaworld Foundation Inc.; ConCom and Charter Change Advocacy Commission Member; chair of the Mindanao TVET; Mindanao Rep., Export Development Council; chair, Joji Ilagan Foundation; former chair of the Mindanao Business Council. E-mail comments to jojibian2@yahoo.com)

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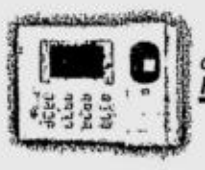

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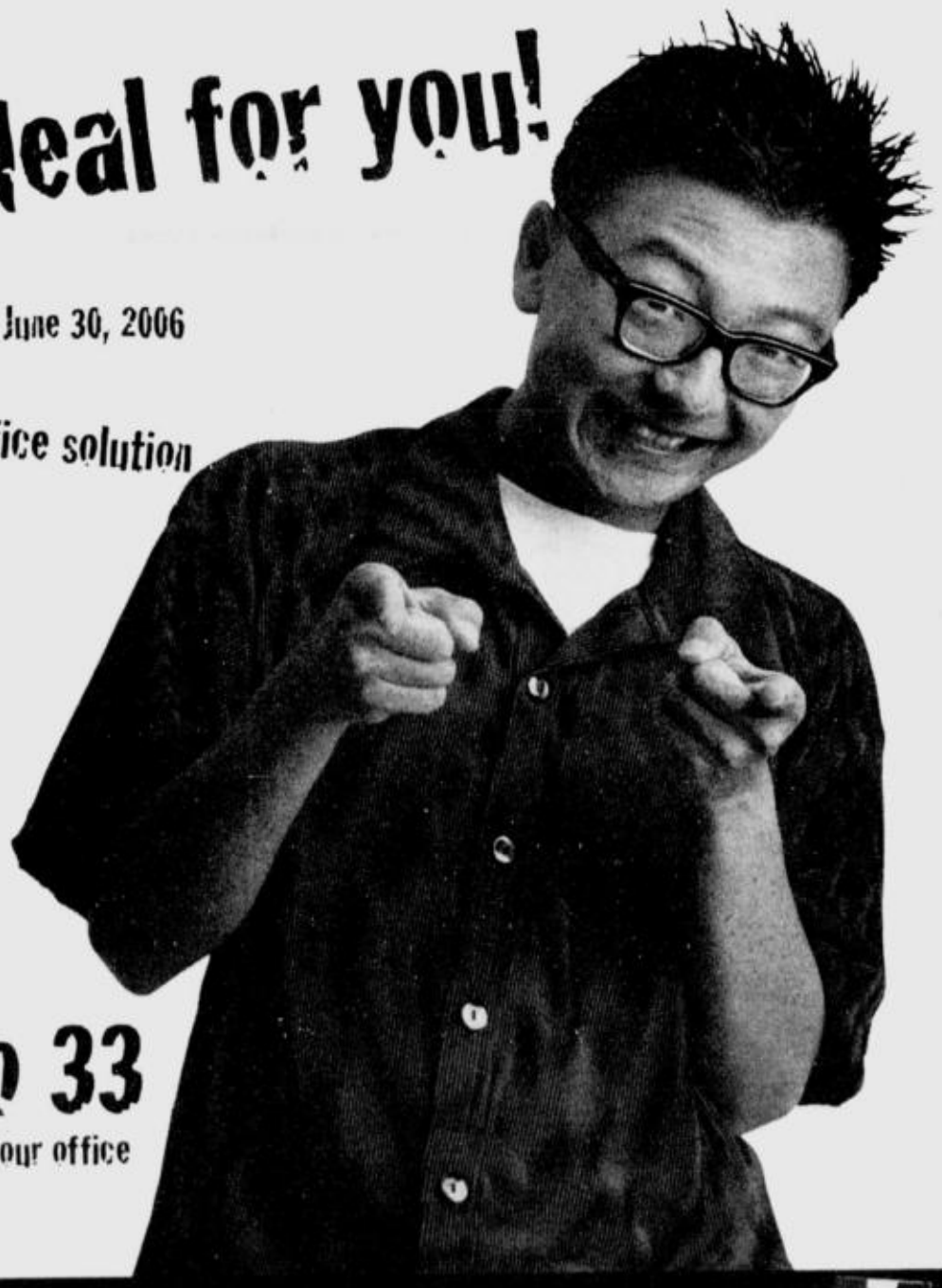

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PNOC-EDC to revise wind power guidelines

By Abigail L. Ho

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL OIL Co. Energy Development Corp. (PNOC-EDC) is looking at revising the specifications of the first phase of its 120-megawatt (MW) Northern Luzon Wind Power Project (NLWPP).

This is to ensure that the cost will stay within the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC)-approved loan for the project.

Phase 1, which involved the establishment of a 40-MW wind farm in Burgos, Ilocos Norte, also entailed the construction of the transmission line that would connect the facility to the National Transmission Corp. substation in Laoag.

Eduardo Manalac, president and chief executive of parent firm PNOC, said PNOC-EDC had already conducted bidding for the project.

"Unfortunately, the cost was very much higher than expected and higher than the approved loan amount by JBIC," he said, "So what we have proposed is to reduce the capacity to 30 MW, to not include the transmission cost, and to nullify the previous bidding."

The revised cost, he said, should approach $100 million due to higher steel prices and the overall higher costs of materials.

JBIC approved a $68-million loan for the project.

PSALM reviews floor price for Calaca coal plant

Gov't moves to avert another failed bidding

By Abigail L. Ho

POWER SECTOR ASSETS AND LIABILITIES Management Corp. is reviewing the $288-million floor price for the 600-megawatt (MW) Calaca coal-fired power plant to ensure that the third bidding for the facility will not fail.

"PSALM management is now reevaluating the reserve price for Calaca. It would be recalled that during the previous bidding, the submitted price proposals were way below the reserve price," PSALM vice president for asset management and electricity Froilan Tampinco said in a statement yesterday.

"We wanted to allow interested parties, under terms to be included in the bidding procedures, a period within which to discuss with PSALM the factors or criteria in arriving at a reserve price," he added.

The reserve or floor price is the minimum amount that the government wants for the asset.

He said PSALM was also discussing whether to conduct another sealed bidding or opt for open negotiations similar to what was done last April 27, the second time the plant was placed on the auction block.

Instead of submitting sealed bids during the next bidding, he said participants could just be allowed to submit price offers for a predetermined number of rounds.

These price offers would be revealed to all bidders.

Each bidder would then be given a chance to revise its price offer in the succeeding rounds, he added.

The entity with the highest price offer, who should have also met the reserve price, would be declared the winner, he said.

"Noting the sustained investor interest, we believe we ought to offer the option which will be most responsive to the investor market. At the same time, we are mindful of our mandate which is to maximize the proceeds from the sale of these assets for the government," he said.

He said in an earlier interview that the third bidding for the asset would likely take place in September.

The Calaca plant was first placed on the auction block in June last year. Bidding was declared a failure when only one bidder showed up.

The second bidding, which was held in April, was again declared a failure when one of the two bidders showed up at the wrong venue.

But PSALM decided to do open negotiations with First Generation Luzon Power Corp. and DMCI Holdings Inc.

They were each given three chances to revise their price offers for the plant.

After the three rounds of revisions, however, both bidders failed to meet the $288-million floor price, resulting in another failed bidding.

The Calaca plant was first placed on the auction block in late June 2005, but the bidding was cancelled when only one of the three expected bidders submitted an offer. The lone bidder was First Gen Luzon Power Corp.

The two other prospective bidders, Japanese firm Mitsui & Co. Ltd. and Filipino-Malaysian Phil-Mal Petroenergy Corp., backed out shortly before the deadline.

PSALM then scheduled a second bidding for the plant in October, but this did not push through. Another auction was set for Nov. 10 but this, too, did not push through.

The second bidding finally pushed through last April, but was declared a failed bid.

Abra's natural dye industry fading, needs market

Text and photos by Artha Kira Paredes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

PEÑARRUBIA, ABRA—ONCE UPON A time, when natural dye was all the rage, the Agaid compound in Barangay Namarabar here was swarming with local and foreign tourists, guests and buyers.

But that was back in 1994 when fashion designer Patis Tesoro herself was a frequent customer who bought the family's natural dyed Tingguian inabel (woven cloth).

But while the natural dyed inabel retains its color for decades, even centuries as the Agaids claim, the natural dye industry itself seems to be fading.

"We have no market anymore," Luis Agaid, 68, reputedly the father of natural dye industry here, told the INQUIRER.

His clan, comprised of 11 families in Namarabar, lives and breathes natural dyeing.

Glory years

In 1994, the Katutubong Kulay Project (under Katutubong Filipino Foundation Inc. sponsored by the Coca Cola Foundation) promoted natural dyeing and natural dye products, such as the Tingguian inabel.

Norma Agaid-Mina, 58, Agaid's sister, remembered rubbing elbows with former First Lady Amelita Ramos, who spearheaded the KKP, and former Sen. Loren Legarda, who took personal interest in natural dye.

Mina said she also exhibited products in trade fairs in different parts of the country.

From 1994 to 1995, Mina said the family employed 32 regular weavers who busied themselves weaving and embroidering day and night just to cope with the orders.

Agaid always took charge of dyeing the yarn.

Business was lucrative enough for them to replace their nipa houses with concrete.

IT ALMOST seems like ages ago when Norma Agaid-Mina was invited to sponsored exhibits like the ones held in Vargas Museum in UP Diliman every Christmas.

Hard times

It was through the KKP that the family was able to plant their 1.5-hectare compound with 1,000 natural dye sources, like mahogany and kapok trees.

Those days are now just part of the family's happy memories.

The natural dye industry has lost its market and sales declined by 90 percent, especially during the last two years, said Librada Donato, 33, daughter of Mina and owner of Namarabar Ethnic Crafts and Antiques.

GONE are the days when even local schools had yearly educational tours at the Agaid compound, the pilot area of natural dye during the Ramos administration. Siblings Luis Agaid and Norma Agaid-Mina said they feared the younger Abrenians were ignorant of their own culture.

Donato said they either had to attend trade fairs, of which they could hardly afford the fee, or go from house to house to offer their products and earn enough to survive.

She said business has not been doing well, and their unpaid electric bills have been mounting.

Family heritage

It is an unfortunate turn of events for the Agaid family, who have embraced natural dye and inlaod (lowland) Tingguian art.

Siblings Luis and Norma belong to the fourth generation of the Agaid family who continue the natural dye tradition.

They said they were not familiar with farming as they grew into the life of natural dyeing and selling antiques.

Agaid himself knows the source of 18 natural dye colors from trees, like guava and narra, tuber like kunig (wild ginger) and shrub like the bain-bain (makahiya or sensitive mimosa).

He said he helped his grandmother in dyeing and weaving before World War II, when he was only about four or five, and that was how he grew to learn and love the craft.

He said it was his blind great great grandmother, Baket Kisamay, who sketched the horse and star inabel designs that Abra is known for.

Most of the products displayed in the provincial government's Partuat ti Abra Trade Center came from Barangay Namarabar.

Rodel Bolante, DTI trade promotions officer, said items from the Namarabar Ethnic Crafts and Antiques were the top sellers during provincial trade fairs.

He said the DTI helped them by inviting them to join trade fairs and through market matching.

But he said financial constraints have prevented many of the locals from joining these fairs.

He said government has no budget to subsidize these entrepreneurs who are valiantly trying to keep the art of natural dyeing alive.

Megaworld to borrow $100 million to develop ₱7.2-B Binondo project

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

PROPERTY GIANT MEGAWORLD Corp. said it would pursue its plan to raise $100 million from the debt market by the second half this year.

Proceeds from the bond offer will be used to fund various projects, sources said.

However, the size of the offer has yet to be finalized, sources added.

The property firm is currently studying trends in global debt markets in view of an expected hike in the US interest rates by the end of this month.

Megaworld has entered into a joint venture with the city government of Manila to develop a P7.2-billion mixed-use complex on a 4.6-hectare lot in Binondo, considered as Manila's Chinatown.

The project involves two parcels of land which will be redeveloped into an educational complex and a residential condominium community. The project is scheduled for completion within five years.

"Megaworld is proud to undertake this urban renewal project in the heart of Binondo as this will be the largest real estate development in Manila in the last 25 years," Megaworld chair and president Andrew Tan had said.

Under its master plan, Megaworld will put up six school buildings on one of the two pieces of property. The school buildings will be complemented by a housing project with a total of 414 residential units for public school teachers and other nonteaching personnel.

The school complex will also host a retail space intended for providers of food and school supplies in addition to sports amenities and parks and playgrounds.

The second parcel of land will give rise to a residential condominium community to be dubbed "Cityplace."

Cityplace will feature 1,700 residential condominium units, a shopping center with a business process outsourcing-ready office space and a boutique hotel for business travelers.

The hotel, along with a promenade accessible to residents and to the public, is envisioned to help put up Binondo as an important tourist destination.

The Cityplace project will pay tribute to Binondo as a melting pot of Malay, Spanish and Chinese influences. Cityplace is envisioned to help preserve and enhance Binondo's rich history and multicultural heritage.

Megaworld is also set to launch new projects this year, which would up its budget of P4 billion to P5 billion in 2006.

Megaworld will launch a new residential project called McKinley Hill Mansions by the second quarter of 2006. This French Renaissance-inspired, medium-rise community will consist of two residential phases with a total of 336 condominium units.

Cebu offers 200-ha land to investors

By Irene R. Sino Cruz
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—SEVERAL INVESTORS ARE NOW looking at the 200-hectare multibillion-peso reclaimed property of the Cebu City government as a potential site for their investments.

The reclaimed property, called the South Road Properties, will be marketed as a prime mixed land use property development project and will accommodate investments in light manufacturing, commercial, tourism, information technology and other services, according to Cebu Investment Promotion Center managing director Joel Mari Yu.

CIPC serves as the city government's marketing arm for the SRP, a completed reclamation project funded by a loan from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC).

The SRP has been registered with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority as a special economic zone.

"The main marketing strategy will be directed towards established and reputable property development companies here and abroad who will be invited to develop "block" sections of the SRP," he added.

This "wholesale" (as opposed to retail) marketing of the SRP will also ensure that onsite infrastructure will be provided at no cost to the city government, he said.

However, qualified investors willing to immediately locate in the SRP will also be accommodated, according to Yu, who added that CIPC has been talking with over 10 prospective investors, which include foreign and Filipino companies.

The prospective investors include a Singaporean container manufacturer, a Taiwanese group, Cebu-based businesses and the Bigfoot group, he said.

Cebutainment Systems Corp. requires 20 hectares and plans to put up a highly-automated manufacturing facility with a capacity of 40 containers daily.

The Taiwanese group, which operates several factories in the Mactan Economic Zone, plans to close down all its operations in China and move these to a 10-hectare area at SRP, Yu added.

The Bigfoot group has also signified interest to lease a total of 20 hectares to house sound stages, movie production facilities, a marina and a commercial center, he said.

A Cebu-based group also plans to get three hectares for its proposed water park project while another group plans to establish a facility to recondition vehicles for export, Yu said.

The SRP will also be considered as a site for a training center for the retirement industry which will be established by JICA as early as next year, he added.

The Cebu City government is allowed to sell up to 51 percent of total area, which is priced at P10,000 and P15,000 per sq m for prime and nonprime areas, respectively.

The monthly lease rate is $0.45 per sq. m and $1.00 per sq m for nonprime and prime areas, respectively.

RP out to counter Fed rate hike

From page B1

index (PSEi) fell for the second straight day, losing 53.29 points yesterday to 2,067.

This was the index's lowest closing since Feb. 9 when it finished at 2,083.65.

The broader All-Shares index likewise fell sharply 26.5 points or 1.96 percent to 1,321.87. Losers outnumbered gainers 64 against 16 while 41 stocks were unchanged.

In a telephone interview, Ms Arroyo's economic adviser, Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, said that a slowdown in the US economy—which the US Federal Reserve board is trying to stave off by hiking the interest rate—would likely chop off 1.74 percentage point in the Philippines gross domestic product with every one percentage point decline in US GDP. The US is one of the country's biggest trading partners.

Financial experts expect the US Federal Reserve to jack up interest rates for the 17th consecutive time this month on higher inflation concerns.

But Favila said that the "Philippines has a tendency to defy trends," citing recent data showing the robust growth of the country's exports and investment inflows.

At the stock exchange, foreign investors dumped blue chips as net foreign selling hit P259 million. This was a result of foreign selling worth P964.7 million compared with buying of P705.2 million

"We are still a victim of the global sell-off," said Astro del Castillo, managing director at First Grade Holdings. "We are not immune to the realignment of portfolios by fund managers in anticipation of a rate hike."

Global stocks were on a rampage led by the fall in US equities.

Wall Street, as gauged by the main Dow Jones Industrial index, declined by 86 points overnight or 0.8 percent to 10,706.14.

Comments from Fed officials this week have firmed up bets in the market that a fresh 25 basis points rate hike is in the offing at the Fed's next meeting on June 29. The Fed's target rate is expected to hit 5.25 percent.

Other Asian bourses were also knocked down on Tuesday. The Hong Kong index dropped 2.47 percent, while Indonesia slid 2.9 percent. Korea lost 2.9 percent while London fell 1.8 percent.

"What is happening is, essentially, an aggressive sell off," according to an analyst of a top Philippine brokerage firm. "Everybody expects the Fed to raise interest rates this month. The question is, if they will continue to raise beyond that meeting. What the market is trying to price in is the likelihood of more interest rate hikes."

With a report from AFP

Rising rates, weak peso . . .

From page B8

ment had become more challenging, especially for the telecommunications sector which was seeing traditional sources of growth plateau in recent months.

Pangilinan said the confluence of rising global interest rates and rising competition and flattening demand in the telecommunications industry might mute PLDT's 2006 earnings growth.

"Because of this, we are cautious for the rest of the year on the country's economic prospects," he said. "We also have to see how the economy will affect business prospects."

The PLDT chief added that higher cost of money, which is a fairly recent phenomenon, has not yet filtered its way into the telecommunications sector, although he expects this to happen eventually.

"Higher interest rates will dampen spending in coming months," he said. "This means less demand for goods and services. This will affect food prices and fuel prices, among others."

Last year, PLDT made almost P5 billion in incremental income due to the strength of the peso against the US dollar, which translated to lower interest payment costs on its dollar-denominated loans as well as bigger receipts from the dollar-denominated portion of its revenues.

Pangilinan said the company would likely report "zero" foreign exchange income if the peso would remain weak for the rest of the year.

Consumer outlook improving, says Bangko Sentral

From page B1

situation, family income level and economic condition of the country. Of the total households surveyed, 10 percent had at least one overseas Filipino worker, and 91.3 percent of the OFW-assisted families received cash remittances in the last 12 months.

Based on the survey, respondents are looking at better income opportunities next quarter and for the rest of the year.

"The highest income class was most optimistic as their consumer outlook DI increased and became positive for the third quarter and the next 12 months," Tetangco said.

"The middle income class followed the same trend, while the consumer outlook of the lowest income group also improved."

The high income class was defined to include households each earning P30,000 and above per month, while the middle income class or those with monthly earnings of P10,000 to P29,999 each. Households earning less than P10,000/month belong to the low-income group.

But for the current quarter, respondents expected a decline in expenditures for basic commodities by an average of 0.8 percent.

However, the same respondents also expected their expenditures on food and electric bills to increase in the next quarter. *Doris C. Dumlao*

IMF: Turmoil in markets is expected correction

DE RATO

CANBERRA—THE BATTERING of global stock markets is a timely correction driven by a reappraisal of risks posed by inflation, interest rates and oil prices, International Monetary Fund chief Rodrigo de Rato yesterday said.

De Rato, managing director of the Washington-based IMF, said markets had plunged as investors reviewed a previously benign attitude towards risk.

"We see that the markets have recently taken a new appraisal of risk and we believe that was probably a correction that was due," he told reporters in Canberra.

"Now we are moving towards a more neutral stance in monetary policy which is healthy because it is more sustainable. But that means interest rates are going up from what we have seen in recent times, so the markets are facing that change."

World stock markets have taken a recent beating. New York's Dow Jones index lost all of its gains of 2006. Tokyo share prices on Tuesday posted their biggest fall since the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks on the United States. And stock markets in London, Paris and Frankfurt have all slumped.

De Rato, in Canberra for meetings with Prime Minister John Howard and members of the Reserve Bank of Australia, said markets were facing the challenge of rising interest rates.

"At the same time there are also some signs of inflationary pressures picking up," he said. "Not too dramatic a situation but nevertheless picking up."

Meanwhile, high oil prices and limited spare capacity in many major economies, including the United States, were impacting the market.

"Another area of concern is certainly what implications (these) will have ... for growth," he said.

The IMF chief said that the prospects for global growth remained strong, with the IMF forecasting 5.0 percent for 2006 and predicting that, in 2007, "the world economy will continue performing at a healthy pace."

"Nevertheless, the markets are looking again at some fundamentals; macroeconomic stability, financial stability, anti-inflationary credibility of monetary authorities (are) becoming more and more important," he said.

Australian Treasurer Peter Costello said the slump on the domestic stock market, which has wiped almost 10 percent off the benchmark S and P/ASX 200 index over the past month, was part of a broader correction.

"There's a correction in other countries and there's a correction in Australia," he said.

"This is what happens when you have a very strong run-up over a period of time. You get a correction; it's not always unwelcome."

Costello said that Australian market had been at all-time highs ahead of the current correction.

The markets had been rattled by fears of global inflation impacting on world growth, triggering a slump in commodity prices, he said, adding that he still expected commodity prices to remain at high levels.

"If you don't have small corrections, eventually you have very large corrections, and it's better to have smaller ones," he said. *AFP*

Asia stocks rebound; oil hit again

SINGAPORE—JAPANESE STOCKS yesterday regained some lost ground from their biggest one-day fall in two years on Tuesday, shoring up other Asian shares but failing to reassure European markets, which were expected to open weaker.

Risk-averse investors, fretting over rising interest rates and concerns that global growth will slow, still dumped gold and metals. Oil fell to a three-week low.

The dollar benefited though, holding near seven-week highs against the euro and the yen as investors flocked to the security of the world's most traded currency.

Dealers expect the UK's FTSE 100 index to open 13-16 points lower, extending Tuesday's losses which pushed the index to a six-month low.

Germany's DAX index was seen falling 26-29 points and France's CAC was seen opening 17-25 points lower following losses on Wall Street the other day when the Dow Jones industrial average fell to its lowest level since January, and the tech-heavy Nasdaq index hit a 7-1/2-month low.

"The market continues to see movements linked to risk aversion," said Kota Kimura, forex manager at Shinkin Central Bank. "Unless some fresh and strong incentives come out, money is likely to keep flowing back to dollar assets."

In Tokyo, Asia's biggest stock market, the benchmark Nikkei stock average eked out a modest gain of 0.6 percent, partly recovering from its biggest one-day percentage fall in two years on Tuesday.

The rise was helped by stocks of companies focused on the domestic economy, such as Internet and telco company Softbank Corp., which jumped more than 7 percent.

Other Asian stock markets gained support from the firmer tone in Tokyo. South Korea's benchmark KOSPI rose 1.5 percent and Taiwan's key index added 2 percent.

The MSCI's Asia ex-Japan index, an indicator of share prices of the biggest Asian companies outside of Japan, was up 0.8 percent, regaining a fraction of the 18 percent loss since hitting a record high on May 8.

Kookmin Bank, South Korea's biggest lender, rose 5.3 percent, while Shinhan Financial Group, the country's second-biggest financial services provider, added 2.2 percent.

Spot gold plunged to below $550 an ounce, a three-month low, to notch a 24-percent drop from a record high hit on May 11. It fell more than 7 percent on Tuesday, its sharpest decline in 15 years.

"We may see more falls but it won't be as big than what we've seen this week," said Shuji Sugata, assistant manager at Mitsubishi Corporation Futures and Securities Ltd. "Previously when we saw a major correction, gold always came back strongly, but investors will be more careful this time about taking positions in gold again."

Investors have dumped riskier assets and moved into the dollar and government bonds since May on worries that the US Federal Reserve will raise rates for the 17th straight time this month to stymie inflation, despite signs that the world's biggest economy and Asia's biggest export market is slowing.

Other central banks have raised rates to fight off commodity-fueled inflation.

The month-long slide in global stocks has wiped out $1.9 trillion in wealth, more than the economic output of the United Kingdom, based on the MSCI World Index, which has fallen nearly 12 percent since its year high in early May.

The rate expectations, buttressed by hawkish comments by US Federal Reserve officials, helped push the dollar to a seven-week high against the euro and yen in New York. The currency stayed near those levels in Asian trade on Wednesday.

The Fed is due to review policy on June 28-29.

By late afternoon trading in Tokyo, the dollar was at 115.06 yen, a notch weaker than a seven-week high of 115.20 yen hit on electronic trading platform EBS.

The euro traded at $1.2572, close to a seven-week low of $1.2530 struck on Tuesday.

Traders said the dollar's next move would depend on the US consumer price index, due at 1230 GMT. Economists polled by Reuters expect the index to rise 0.4 percent in May from a month earlier.

US crude oil fell to a three-week low of $68.10 a barrel in Asia, extending a two-day decline, pressured by the commodities sell-off and as traders anticipated a gasoline stock build in US inventories.

"Oil won't ignore the broader commodities move, it's too important a part of the indexes," said Tobin Gorey, a commodities analyst at Commonwealth Bank of Australia.

Japanese government bond prices rose. The two-year yield fell 2.5 basis points to 0.7 percent. *Reuters*

China reports surge in industrial output, property rates

SHANGHAI—CHINA'S MAIN benchmark of industrial output rose 17.9 percent in May from a year earlier, the government yesterday reported in the latest release of higher-than-expected economic data.

May's industrial output totaled 706 billion yuan (US$88.2 billion; 70 billion euros), the National Bureau of Statistics reported. It said industrial output rose 17 percent year-on-year in January-May.

China's economy grew 10.3 percent in the first three months of the year, boosted by strong growth in bank lending and surging exports. The government has raised interest rates and sought to restrain bank lending for investment in industries thought to be overheated—so far without much sign of success.

Forecasts for May had put growth in industrial output at below 17 percent.

Auto production rose 28.4 percent in May from a year earlier to 620,000 units, up from 21 percent growth in April. Pig iron output rose 23 percent, crude steel 19.6 percent and steel products 27 percent, the bureau said.

Manufacturing remains "very, very robust," Tan Hui, an economist with Standard Chartered Bank said, noting worries over excess production in some industries, such as autos and steel.

Meanwhile, data released Wednesday showed that property prices in 70 major Chinese cities rose 5.8 percent in May from a year earlier.

The fastest growth was in the northeastern city of Dalian, where residential prices climbed 15.2 percent from a year earlier, the National Development and Reform Commission reported.

Next in line was Shenzhen, which borders Hong Kong, where prices rose 13.7 percent, followed by the northern city of Hohhot, where prices climbed 11.4 percent, it said.

The government recently enacted measures aimed at preventing property prices from spiraling higher and encouraging construction of affordable housing, instead of luxury apartment blocks and villas.

Prices in Shanghai, where such measures were implemented more than a year ago, saw real estate prices fall 6.2 percent year-on-year in May, the commission said. *AP*

People, Events & Products

Panasonic launches Lumix Digital Still Cameras

PANASONIC INTRODUCES THE next generation of Lumix Digital Still Cameras with Dual Image Stabilization, a combination of Mega OIS and the New High-Sensitivity Mode.

The New High Sensitivity mode allows shooting at a maximum sensitivity setting of ISO 1600. This mode acts as another anti-blurring measure, in addition to the Mega OIS, by suppressing image blur which can be caused by the movement of subjects, such as children and pets. And especially benefits indoor photography by shooting at fast shutter speeds.

This complements the Mega OIS (Optical Image Stabilizer), the image stabilization system, against hand-shake that ensures no picture deterioration. Panasonic is the first company in the industry to succeed in building Mega OIS into a compact digital still camera. Now, it has set standards in digital photography as proven by users all over the world.

Thanks to this powerful combination of image stabilization technology, both hand-shake and subject movement, the two major causes of image blur, are compensated for. Thus, producing nothing but clear images.

Another superior feature is its 28mm wide angle lens. Panasonic was able to integrate this useful lens into a compact and slim camera. Now, it is easier to take indoor group photos, architecture or scenery with dynamic width and rich perspective. With the wide angle lens, you can get more people into one picture than the usual 3 or 4 you can get into the frame.

This year's Panasonic Lumix Series Digital Still Cameras will feature six new models: the DMC-FX01, the world's smallest camera with 28mm Wide-Angle Lens; the DMC-FZ7 with 12X Optical Zoom; the DMC-LS2 with 5-Megapixel 3X Optical Zoom, which runs on 2 AA batteries; the 6-Megapixel DMC-LZ5 and 5-Megapixel DMC-LZ3 with Optical 6X Zoom (also 2 AA battery-operated); and the Traveller Zoom DMC-TZ1, the world's smallest 10X Optical Zoom digital camera.

PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT FOR MULTI-USAGE CARD ANNOUNCED

Joseph Issifu, president and COO of First Versatile Smartcard Solutions Corp and Michael Donnelly, member of the Management Board of ERG Group of Australia, sign the licensing agreement between their companies for the forthcoming launch of a brand new electronic payment system using contactless card technology. The card functions like a debit card and can be reloaded from time to time. It can be used in convenience stores, fastfood centers, drugstores, gas stations, supermarkets, and eventually, transportation systems in the metropolis. It will be available in convenience stores and sari-sari stores initially in Metro Manila and its surrounding areas. At the signing were James Mackay, chair , First Versatile SmartCard Solutions Corp; Joseph Ndewura Issifu, president and COO, First Versatile SmartCard Solutions Corp; Michael Donnelly, member of the management board of ERG Group; and Mohammad Kader business development manager ERG Group.

BTS Clips

Catch the Fujifilm fever

NOW IS THE BEST TIME MORE THAN ever to check out the latest and most innovative Fujifilm and YKL products, Digital Cameras at the Paseo Center in Makati from June 13 to June 17. Finally bring home the Finepix camera you have ever wanted, the cool accessories such as Mobile printer, USB Drives, and experience printing your own photos from your camera phone for free with the YKL's Eazy Pix stand alone photo kiosk. This exhibition of Fujifilm and other YKL's products exclusively offers customers as much as 60 percent discount on its sought after and popular Finepix digital cameras. Get to know more about high-quality Fujifilm accessories and services as well to complete your digital experience. Fujifilm Finepix digital cameras, digital image processing, Pivi Mobile printer and Eazy Pix stand-alone kiosk are regularly available at Fujifilm Digital Imaging Stations in major malls and department stores nationwide. Paseo Center is located at the heart of Ayala Triangle, corners Paseo Avenue, Sedeno and Valero Sts., Makati City.

Calling FEU HS Batch 84

IN PREPARATION FOR THE GRAND SILver alumni homecoming of FEU High School Batch 1984, the Alumni Relations Committee is calling all members of the said batch to submit their contact information for the update of the directory through email address pinkypop_84@yahoo.com or call 840-3577 (during office hours) or (0917)8862611.

PSE online stock trading tournament

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange and the Manila Jaycees, CitisecOnline, an online stock brokerage firm, has found an effective medium to reach the internet generation. The leading proponent of online trading, together with the PSE, is sponsoring a tournament that simulates stock market trading and is conducted online. Registration is ongoing at www.pse.com.ph until June 15. The tournament, which is open to all and ends July 31, is a sequel to an annual PSE event for students. PSE officials disclose that the 2006 edition of the PSE online stock trading tournament had 1,200 students from 32 colleges and universities all over the country competing to increase the value of their individual virtual portfolios through an online trading game that mimics the activities of the PSE. Key information such as most active stocks, the top 20 gainers and losers, heavily traded stocks and many more are now broadcast efficiently through the company's site. Such information will be made available by CitisecOnline to all participants during the whole duration of the tournament by providing them free trial access to their website, www.citisec-online.com. Access to the CitisecOnline website will help them get a better feel of online trading. In addition the website also provides daily research and timely company updates and analysis to better hone their abilities. For more details and free trials of the CitisecOnline website, please call 6-333-777 or send inquiries to helpdesk@citiseconline.com.

SC Johnson's new GM

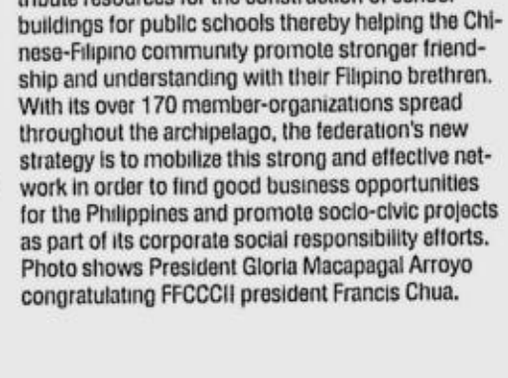
SC JOHNSON & Son Inc announced the appointment of Ramon Alejandro P. Daez as general manager - Malay Cluster (Philippines, Malaysia and Singapore). Daez has a combined 22 years of senior sales and marketing leadership experience and joined SC Johnson in 2001 as sales director. His new responsibilities will include leading the Management Committee in these respective countries to achieve organizational, market share and financial objectives.

Astellas Pharma Phils appoints new VP

ASTELLAS PHARMA Phils Inc (formerly Yamanouchi Phils Inc), a leading urology and oncology company, has recently announced the appointment of Ian P. Vendivel as its new vice president and marketing director. Prior to this, Vendivel served as the company's national marketing director. A veteran marketing executive for over 20 years now, Vendivel is responsible for making Astellas Pharma Phils into what it is now - a P200 million business from a P14 million business in 1997. He is a top graduate of the Asian Institute of Management.

Kong It! promo winners

BURGER KING ANNOUNces the winners of the Kong It! text raffle promo. Winners in the 1st weekly draw of a Nokia N90 and a 30GB Apple I-pod, respectively were Ryan Garcia of San Pedro, Laguna and Barbara Elishea Cada of San Mateo, Rizal. In the 2nd draw, Kristian Carlo Ed A. Lalas of E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Q.C. won a Sony PSP while Johanna de Belen of Francisco, Bulacan took home a 30GB Apple I-pod. In the 3rd draw, Doris Pabalan of Imus, Cavite and Tom Villacorta of Project 7, Q.C., won a Sony PSP and a Nokia N90, respectively. The 4th draw had Michael Carlo Caparas of Sta. Cruz, Manila and Paolo Marquez of Palanan, Makati City winning a Nokia N90 and a 30GB Apple I-pod. In the 5th draw, lucky texters Gay Mitra of P. Ocampo, Malate and Victor Mendoza of United St., Mandaluyong City brought home a Sony PSP and a 30GB Apple I-pod. In the grand draw, Burger King gave away cool high-tech gadgets to six more of its customers. Hazelyne Elgar of Marist Village, Marikina City and Eladio Villanueva of Sitio Burol, Taytay, Rizal walked away with one unit each of Sony PSP. Hanzel Dwight Luy of Sikatuna Village, Q.C. and Teresa Lopez of FEU Village, Antipolo, meanwhile, won for themselves a new Nokia N90 unit each. Finally, Tiffany Mallillin of TCEV, Antipolo and Gregory Co of Valle Verde, Pasig City were the winners of two units of 30GB Apple I-pod.



FFCCCII RECEIVES PAGKILALA SA PAGLILINGKOD AWARD

The Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry Inc. (FFCCCII) was given the 'Pagkilala sa Paglilingkod' Award by the Chinese-Filipino community during the joint celebration of the 108th Philippine Independence Day and the 5th Filipino-Chinese Friendship Day held recently at the Reception Hall of the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC). The award was given to the FFCCCII for providing invaluable service to the Filipino people through charity projects specially by mobilizing the Chinese-Filipino community to contribute resources for the construction of school buildings for public schools thereby helping the Chinese-Filipino community promote stronger friendship and understanding with their Filipino brethren. With its over 170 member-organizations spread throughout the archipelago, the federation's new strategy is to mobilize this strong and effective network in order to find good business opportunities for the Philippines and promote socio-civic projects as part of its corporate social responsibility efforts. Photo shows President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo congratulating FFCCCII president Francis Chua.

INYOUNG-PHILIPPINES, INC.
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- Graduate of Civil Engineering course;
- Familiar on Steel Plate Product engineering analysis;
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- Responsible in the implementation of the related project;
- At least five (5) years related work experience in Engineering management specifically in plant production;
- Excellent communication skills

PRODUCTION TECHNICAL MANAGER

- Graduate of Mechanical Engineering course;
- Excellent Computer application operation;
- Familiar on Steel Plate Product engineering analysis;
- At least five (5) years related work experience in Eng'g management;
- Must have related work experience in Steel Plate Production;
- Must have related work experience in material planning;
- Prepares technical drawing and specification specifically steel manufacturing and fabrication;
- Excellent communication skills

ADMINISTRATION MANAGER

- Graduate of any business related course preferably with masters in Business Administration;
- Must have related work experience in Admin Management;
- At least eight (8) years related work experience in Administration management;
- Excellent communication skills

Interested applicants may directly apply and/or submit their resumé to the address indicated below:

INYOUNG-PHILIPPINES, INC.
Human Resources Department
Portion of Block 11 and 15 SRF Compound,
Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Zambales
Telephone No. (047) 252-5375-77; Facsimile: (047) 252-5379

PNOC-ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
PNOC
Energy Complex, Merritt Road
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City
Tel. No. 893-1320, Local 5282

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND BID

The PNOC-Energy Development Corporation is inviting all interested suppliers to apply and submit sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the following:

Various Sizes of Through Conduit Valves under FGT 61901
Approved Budget: **PHP 3,936,700.00**

Eligibility forms and bidding documents shall be available for issuance at the above address c/o **Ms. Maria Cristina Lynn M. Mercado** starting **June 6, 2006** and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P400.00 per document.

For purposes of clarifying certain matters, a pre-bidding conference shall be held on **June 15, 2006, 2:00 p.m.** at the above address.

Applications for eligibility and sealed bids shall be submitted to, and registered with the PNOC-EDC Supply Management Department at the above address, and thereafter dropped in the padlocked bid box thereat not later than **2:00 p.m. (Supply Management Department Wall Clock Time) of June 29, 2006.** Public opening of bids shall follow immediately thereafter. **Late bids shall not be accepted.**

Prospective bidders shall signify conformance to the bidding terms and conditions, as required, and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. Source of funding is from Internal Cash Generation of PNOC-EDC. All bids should be within the Approved Budget for the Contract in order to qualify.

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation reserves the right to annul the bidding process, to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to PNOC-EDC without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the ground(s) for PNOC-EDC's action.

Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee I

(PDI – June 8 & 15, 2006)

PNOC-ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
PNOC
Merrit Road, Fort Bonifacio, 1200 Taguig City, Philippines
P.O. Box 2102 MCPO, Tel. Nos. 893-6001 to 47/893-1320 Fax No. 840-1575

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites interested contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project:

GENERAL SERVICES CONTRACT FOR BACMAN GEOTHERMAL PRODUCTION FIELD (BGPF) EDC 06-061

The approved project cost is P9,722,789.04 to be charged against PNOC-EDC fund. The contract duration is Two (2) years.

Application forms for eligibility and the bidding documents may be secured from the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group, Fort Bonifacio (c/o N. P. Calling) starting **June 15, 2006 between 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **Pesos: One Thousand (P1,000.00).**

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **June 22, 2006, 9:30 AM** at PNOC-EDC BGPF Admin Complex, Bonga, Sorsogon. Site inspection will follow thereafter.

Applications for Eligibility and sealed bids shall be received by the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group at PNOC-EDC, 1st Floor Building 5, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, Metro Manila, **not later than 2:00 p.m. on July 5, 2006 (Contracts Administration Group Office Wall Clock Time)** and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC.

BAC CHAIRMAN

(PDI–June 15 & 22, 2006)

BOARD OF INVESTMENTS dti

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that GLC KEY BUSINESS VENTURES CORP. is applying for registration with the Board of Investments (BOI) as **New IT Export Service Firm in the field of Data Entry Services** on a **Pioneer** Status with project/plant site located at **12th Floor Common Goal Building, Madrigal Business Park, Alabang-Zapote Road, Ayala-Alabang, Muntinlupa City.**

Any person with valid objections on the above-mentioned project may file his/her objection in writing under oath, with the BOI within three (3) days from the date of this publication.

(Sgd.) RUDY B. CAÑA
Director
Project Evaluation
and Registration Department

(PDI – June 15, 2006)

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BOARD OF INVESTMENTS dti

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that **GDMC GLOBAL DATA MANAGEMENT CORPORATION** is applying for registration with the Board of Investments (BOI) as **New IT Export Service Firm in the field of Operation of Data Entry Services** on a **Non-Pioneer** Status with project/plant site located at **12th Floor – A Ayala Life Building, Madrigal Business Park, Alabang-Zapote Road, Ayala-Alabang, Muntinlupa City.**

Any person with valid objections on the above-mentioned project may file his/her objection in writing under oath, with the BOI within three (3) days from the date of this publication.

(Sgd.) RUDY B. CAÑA
Director
Project Evaluation
and Registration Department

(PDI – June 15, 2006)

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Topics include: The accounting cycle; Adjusting journal entries; Financial Statements like Balance Sheet and Income Statements; The Cash Flow Statement and Financial Statements. This program is slated on Thurs & Friday, June 15 & 16, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. at Holiday Inn Galleria, Ortigas.

The workshop will have as its resource lecturer Ms. Cecile Catahan, Consultant, Trainer and Certified Public Accountant.

This seminar is sponsored by Porter and Miles Inc. with office address at Suite 2502-C Tektite Tower East, Ortigas Center. Call Mercy at 638-7719 / 20 for more information / reservation. Limited seats only.

More Classified Ads:
Supreme Court and DAR-Agusan on Page A-6, Philhealth on A-7, SSS & Transco on A-12

Camp Gen. Aguinaldo High School (CGEAHS) batch 1985 reunion

CALLING all CGEAHS Batch '85. We will have our 1st reunion after 20 years set on December 17, 2006. You may log on to www.cgeahs.com or call Ms. Aileen Academia-Garcia at 438-3309 or 0920-9115081 or Mr. Calo sM. Barlisan 0918-6530404. Let's reminisce our BAGETS "Just got lucky..." Days.

OBITUARIES

ATTY. JORGE T. MARIANO, JR.

of Malabon City

FOUNDER & PRESIDENT
EASTERN ASSURANCE & SURETY CORPORATION

FOUNDER & TREASURER
EASTERN CONSTRUCTION COMPANY, INC.

Peacefully joined his Creator on Saturday, 10th of June 2006 at the age of 81.

He is survived by his bereaved wife, **FLORECITA**, children and grandchildren

JOJI – EXPEDITA
Anisa & Ryan, Jorge IV & France, Jason & Mariel and Miguel

MARISSA – PATERNO
Margo & Sonny, Alex & Myca, Melissa and Patricia

MANUEL – FLORIE
Tanya, Jowell, Krisel

ENRIQUE – MARSHA
Charles, James and Carol Anne

BENJAMIN, ALEXANDER (†) and **FERNANDO** (†)

siblings Virginia, Tina, Renato and Erminio, great-grandchildren, nephews, nieces, relatives and friends, request fervent prayers and special petitions for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at their Malabon residence, 556 MH del Pilar St., Santulan, Malabon City.

Cremation will take place on Sunday, 18 June 2006 at Eternal Gardens. Interment Mass will be held at 5:00 p.m. at the Sacred Heart of Mary Ossuary, Maysilo, Malabon.

I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies, and whoever believes in Me will never die.
Jn 11:25-26

Our beloved Mama
Tita and Lola

SERAFINA INUMERABLE WARREN

Peacefully and joyfully joined our Lord on Wednesday, 14th June 2006 at the age of 88.

Pining joins her husband, **Carlos** (†), her son **Marianito** (†), and her grandson **Rafael Anton** (†) in the everlasting Love of the Father. Her daughter **Purita** and her husband **Jorge**, together with her dear granddaughters **Ana Patricia** and **Isabelle Ma. Angela,** and her relatives, fervently pray to Our Loving God of Mercy for her eternal rest and peace only He can give. We ask Our Father for His infinite mercy through Jesus Christ, His Beloved Son, Our Lord.

Her remains lie in state at Venice Chapel, Loyola Memorial Chapels, Sucat, Parañaque. Cremation shall be at 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, 17th June 2006. Her remains shall be interred at the crypt at the Lower Chapel of St. James the Greater, Ayala Alabang Village immmediately after the Holy Mass at 3:00 p.m. also at the Lower Chapel.

REMEDIOS RODRIGUEZ FUCOY

of Mabini, Pangasinan and Pagadian City

(Beloved wife of **Flaviano E. Fucoy, Sr.**)

Peacefully joined her Creator on June 10, 2006 at the age of 85.

Her loving children: **Inday & Nick, Nonong & Nonie, Eddie & Arlene, Titos & Roger, Marmie, Nicky & Maryann, Robbie & Rowena, Manny, Dick & Nellie;** together with brother **Doding**, sister **Nora**; grandchildren, relatives, request prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at the family residence at Jamisola St., Pagadian City.

Interment will be today, June 15, 2006 at the Sto. Niño Memorial Gardens, Pagadian City after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at the Sto. Niño Cathedral, Pagadian City.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."
John 3:16

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INVITATION TO BID

Sealed bids will be accepted by the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation (PDIC), the Liquidator, thru the Receivership and Liquidation (R/L) Real and Other Properties Owned or Acquired (ROPOA) Disposal Committee (hereinafter referred to as the "Committee") on the following dates and venue:

Area where the properties are located	Date/Time of Opening of Bids	Venue
Bicol Region	June 27, 2006/2:00 pm	Ibalong Conference Room located at the City Hall Compound, Legaspi City
Outside Bicol Region	July 4, 2006/2:00 pm	6/F PDIC Training Room PDIC, 2228 Chino Roces Avenue, Makati City

for the sale of properties of closed banks subject to the terms and conditions specified below. Prospective buyers are enjoined to inspect the following listed properties before participating in the public bidding.

JUNE 27, 2006

BANCO RURAL SORSOGON, INC.

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	TITLE / TD	MIN. BID PRICE (P)
06-06-01	Sorsogon City	400 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 2-A-4 Brgy. Guinlajon, West Guinlajon	T-48845[be]	140,000.00
06-06-02	Sorsogon	148 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-25 Sto. Niño Subd., Brgy. Cogon, Juban	T-42402[be]	51,800.00
06-06-03	Sorsogon	148 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-26, Sto. Niño Subd., Brgy. Cogon, Juban	T-42403[be]	51,800.00
06-06-04	Sorsogon	132 sqm, vacant corner residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-51 Sto. Niño Subd., Brgy. Cogon, Juban	T-42428[be]	50,820.00
06-06-05	Sorsogon	143 sqm, vacant corner residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-52, Sto. Niño Subd., Brgy. Cogon, Juban	T-42429[be]	55,055.00
06-06-06	Sorsogon	148 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-53 Sto. Niño Subd Brgy. Cogon, Juban	T-42430[be]	51,800.00
06-06-07	Sorsogon	161 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-54 Sto. Niño Subd., Brgy. Cogon, Juban	T-42431[be]	56,350.00
06-06-08	Sorsogon	173 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-55, Sto. Niño Subd., Brgy. Cogon, Juban	T-42432[be]	60,550.00
06-06-09	Sorsogon	186 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-56, Sto. Niño Subd., Brgy. Cogon, Juban	T-42433[be]	65,100.00
06-06-10	Sorsogon	198 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-57, Sto. Niño Subd., Brgy. Cogon, Juban	T-42434[be]	69,300.00
06-06-11	Sorsogon	148 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-32, Sto. Niño Subd., Brgy. Cogon, Juban	T-42409[be]	51,800.00
06-06-12	Sorsogon	148 sqm, residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-27, Sto. Niño Subd., Brgy. Cogon, Juban	T-42404[be]	51,800.00
06-06-13	Sorsogon City	411 sqm, corner residential lot, Lot 007/10, Brgy. Rizal, West District	ARP # 1999-14026-0304[bceg]	82,200.00
06-06-14	Sorsogon	269 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 1-H, Brgy. Salvacion, Sta. Magdalena	T-31296[bce]	134,500.00
06-06-15	Albay	287 sqm., residential, Lot 8035-J, Brgy. Penafrancia, Daraga	117184[bce]	143,500.00
06-06-16	Sorsogon	194 sqm, residential lot, Lot 2430 Brgy. San Roque, Bulusan	OCT P-9860[bce]	155,200.00
06-06-17	Sorsogon City	693 sqm, interior residential lot, Lot 1449-E Brgy. Basud, West District	T-46710[be]	207,900.00
06-06-18	Sorsogon City	392 sqm, residential lot, Lot 7137-G Purok 3 Brgy. Cambulaga, West District	T-55354[bce]	235,200.00
06-06-19(2)	Sorsogon City	231 sqm, residential lot, Lot 3225, Divina Street (interior), Brgy. Talisay, West District	T-22578[be]	184,800.00
06-06-20(2)	Sorsogon City	200 sqm, residential lot, Lot 1107-F, San Isidro, Bacon District	T-40578[be]	80,000.00
06-06-21(2)	Sorsogon City	200 sqm, residential, Lot 1107-D, San Isidro, Bacon District	T-40576[be]	80,000.00
06-06-22(2)	Sorsogon City	200 sqm, residential lot, Lot 1107-C, San Isidro, Bacon District	T-40575[be]	80,000.00
06-06-23(2)	Sorsogon City	203 sqm, residential lot, Lot 1107-B, San Isidro, Bacon District	T-40574[bce]	81,200.00
06-06-24(2)	Sorsogon City	300 sqm, residential lot, Lot 4596-C, Brgy. Buhatan, East District	T-33573[bce]	150,000.00
06-06-25(2)	Sorsogon City	190 sqm, residential lot, Lot 1107-H, San Isidro, Bacon District	T-40580[bce]	76,000.00
06-06-26(2)	Sorsogon City	200 sqm, residential lot, Lot 1107-G, San Isidro, Bacon District	T-40579[be]	80,000.00
06-06-27(2)	Sorsogon City	336 sqm, residential lot, Lot 10 Blk 25, (El Refugio Subdivision) Brgy. Pangpang, West District	T-27970[be]	201,600.00
06-06-28(2)	Sorsogon	443 sqm, commercial lot, Lot 1-B-2, Zone IV, Poblacion, Bulan	T-54627[be]	5,316,000.00
06-06-29(2)	Albay	232 sqm, residential lot, Lot 2403-C, Brgy. San Roque, Daraga	T-103577[bce]	232,000.00
06-06-30(2)	Tabaco City	588 sqm, residential lot, Lot 1 Blk 2, Brgy. San Lorenzo	T-70170[bce]	1,176,000.00

BANCO RURAL LEGASPI, INC.

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	TITLE / TD	MIN. BID PRICE (P)
06-06-31	Camarines Norte	798 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 2180-A-5-A Brgy. Bagasbas, Daet	T-44635[be]	399,000.00
06-06-32	Camarines Norte	309 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 21, Block 7, Brgy. Bagasbas, Daet	T-35289[be]	154,500.00
06-06-33	Camarines Norte	258 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 948-E-3-A-2-C, Brgy. Lag-on, Daet	T-44185[be]	258,000.00
06-06-34	Camarines Norte	477 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 1, Block 15, Brgy. VII, Poblacion, Daet	T-33616[be]	715,500.00
06-06-35	Camarines Norte	140 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 10, Block 1, Brgy. Malacong, San Lorenzo Ruiz	T-23692[be]	35,000.00
06-06-36	Camarines Norte	120 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 20, Block 7, Brgy. San Roque, Mercedes	T-39378[be]	60,000.00
06-06-37	Legaspi City	360 sqm, residential lot, Lot 53, Imperial Court Subdivision	38100[be]	1,080,000.00
06-06-38	Legaspi City	200 sqm, residential lot, Lot 52-A, Imperial Court Subdivision	T-34039[be]	600,000.00
06-06-39	Legaspi City	3,132 sqm. residential lot, Lot 7327-B, Brgy. Buyuan	15342[bce]	156,600.00
06-06-40	Legaspi City	144 sqm, residential/commercial lot with improvements, Lot 511-B, Maria Clara Street, Ilawod	44390[bce]	2,150,400.00
06-06-41	Albay	48 sqm. commercial lot, Lot 6804-A-11, Brgy. Allang (Francia), Ligao City	T-106569[be]	57,600.00
06-06-42	Albay	60 sqm. residential lot, Lot 31, Poblacion (Tipon-Tipon), Camalig	T-96525[bce]	60,000.00
06-06-43	Albay	294 sqm. residential lot, Lot 6032, Centro, Camalig	TD 002-00077[bceg]	294,000.00
06-06-44	Albay	300 sqm. residential lot with improvements Lot 16-D, Poblacion, Pioduran	T-98166[bce]	355,920.00
06-06-45	Sorsogon City	236 sqm. residential lot with improvements, Lot 2, Block 46, Our Lady's Village, Brgy Pangpang	T-44370[bce]	358,000.00
06-06-46	Naga City	180 sqm. residential lot, Lot 1903-A-2, Liboton, cor. Sto. Nino St., Brgy. Penafrancia	22716[bce]	450,000.00
06-06-47	Iriga City	1,239 sqm. residential lot/orchard, Lot 5892, Brgy. San Agustin and San Isidro	OCT-474[be]	640,500.00
06-06-48(2)	Albay	352 sqm., residential llot w/ improvements, Lot 4 Blk E-1 Virgin Valley Subdivision Peñafrancia, Daraga	T-128394[ecl]	281,600.00
06-06-49(2)	Albay	435 sqm., residenial lot, Lot 1941 Blk C-15 San Lorenzo, Baranghawon Tabaco City	T-72206[ef]	348,000.00
06-06-50(2)	Sorsogon	541 sqm., residential lot, Lot 3 Sto. Niño Subdivision, Brgy. Cogon, Juban	T-45942[be]	189,350.00
06-06-51(2)	Sorsogon	198 sqm., residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-44 Sto Niño Subdivision, Brgy. Cogon, Juban	42421[be]	69,300.00
06-06-52(2)	Sorsogon	160 sqm., residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-47 Sto. Niño Subdivision, Brgy. Cogon, Juban	42424[be]	56,000.00
06-06-53(2)	Sorsogon	186 sqm., residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-45 Sto. Niño Subdivision, Brgy. Cogon, Juban	42422[be]	65,100.00
06-06-54(2)	Sorsogon	162 sqm., residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-6 Sto. Niño Subdivision, Brgy. Cogon, Juban	42383[be]	56,700.00
06-06-55(2)	Sorsogon	148 sqm., residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-48 Sto. Niño Subdivision, Brgy. Cogon, Juban	42425[be]	51,800.00
06-06-56(2)	Sorsogon	189 sqm., residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-19 Sto. Nino Ville Subdivision Cogon, Juban	42396[be]	66,150.00
06-06-57(2)	Sorsogon	155 sqm., residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-8 Sto. Nino Ville Subdivision, Juban	42385[be]	54,250.00
06-06-58(2)	Sorsogon	135 sqm., residential lot, Lot2100-B-2-49 Sto. Nino Ville Subdivision, Juban	42426[be]	47,250.00
06-06-59(2)	Sorsogon	223 sqm., residential land, Lot 2100-B-2-42 Sto. Nino Ville Subdivision, Juban	42419[be]	78,050.00
06-06-60(2)	Sorsogon	123 sqm., residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-50 Sto. Nino Ville Subdivision, Juban	42427[be]	43,050.00
06-06-61(2)	Sorsogon	173 sqm., residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-46 Sto. Nino Ville Subdivision, Juban	42423[be]	60,550.00
06-06-62(2)	Sorsogon	175 sqm. residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-15 Sto. Nino Ville Subdivision Cogon, Juban	42392[be]	61,250.00
06-06-63(2)	Sorsogon	236 sqm. residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-41 Sto. Nino Ville Subdivision Cogon, Juban	42418[be]	82,600.00
06-06-64(2)	Sorsogon	148 sqm. residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-24 Sto. Nino Ville Subdivision Cogon, Juban	42401[be]	51,800.00
06-06-65(2)	Sorsogon	170 sqm. residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-12 Sto. Nino Ville Subdivision Cogon, Juban	42389[be]	59,500.00
06-06-66(2)	Sorsogon	175 sqm. residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-16 Sto. Nino Ville Subdivision Cogon, Juban	42393[be]	61,250.00
06-06-67(2)	Sorsogon	301 sqm. residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-23 Sto. Nino Ville Subdivision Cogon, Juban	42376[be]	120,400.00
06-06-68(2)	Sorsogon	174 sqm. residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-23 Sto. Nino Ville Subdivision Cogon, Juban	42400[be]	60,900.00
06-06-69(2)	Sorsogon	174 sqm. residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-14 Sto. Nino Ville Subdivision Cogon, Juban	42391[be]	60,900.00
06-06-70(2)	Sorsogon	279 sqm. residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-59-D Sto. Nino Ville Subdivision Cogon, Juban	46567[be]	223,200.00
06-06-71(2)	Sorsogon	187 sqm. residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-4-B Sto. Nino Ville Subdivision Cogon, Juban	45039[be]	74,800.00
06-06-72(2)	Sorsogon	179 sqm. residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-13 Sto. Nino Ville Subdivision Cogon, Juban	T-42390[be]	62,650.00
06-06-73(2)	Sorsogon	150 sqm. residential lot, Lot 2100-B-2-7 Sto. Nino Ville Subdivision Cogon, Juban	T-42384[be]	52,500.00
06-06-74(2)	Camarines Norte	432 sqm, residential lot, Lot 2-X-6-N-1 Purok 4, Brgy. 1 Mercedes	T-48335[be]	259,200.00

RB TALISAY (CAMARINES NORTE), INC.

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	TITLE / TD	MIN. BID PRICE (P)
06-06-75	Camarines Norte	2,038 sqm, interior residential lot, Lot 1022 pt. pls 488-D, Brgy. Lag-on, Daet	TD 020-0296[beg]	40,760.00
06-06-76	Camarines Norte	1,321 sqm, residential lot, Lot 145 National Highway, Brgy. Pob. II, Basud	TD 002-0170[beg]	858,650.00

RB BACACAY (ALBAY), INC.

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	TITLE / TD	MIN. BID PRICE (P)
06-06-77	Legaspi City	260 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 10507-B, San Ramon, Puro	18024[be]	52,000.00
06-06-78	Legaspi City	257 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 10507-A, San Ramon, Puro	18025[be]	51,400.00

RB PILI (CAMARINES SUR), INC.

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	TITLE / TD	MIN. BID PRICE (P)
06-06-79	Camarines Sur	272 sqm, residential lot, Lot 3 Block 4 Brgy. Vinagre, Tigaon	6503[b]	136,000.00

RB MAGARAO (CAMARINES SUR), INC.

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	TITLE / TD	MIN. BID PRICE (P)
06-06-80	Camarines Sur	400 sqm, residential lot, Lot 4000 Brgy. San Pedro, Cabusao	ARP- 97-007-00027[beg]	120,000.00
06-06-81	Camarines Sur	371 sqm, residential lot, Lot 3371 Brgy. Talidtid, Canaman	ARP 97-023-157[beg]	74,200.00

RB BOMBON (CAMARINES SUR), INC.

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	TITLE / TD	MIN. BID PRICE (P)
06-06-82	Albay	351 sqm, residential lot, Lot 1030 Brgy. Bacolod, Libon	OCT-VM-18814[be]	105,300.00
06-06-83	Camarines Sur	992.04 sqm, residential lot, Lot 332 Brgy. San Roque, Bombon	ARP 97-007-0589[bceg]	307,520.00
06-06-84	Camarines Sur	320 sqm, interior residential lot, Lot 1-C-1-J-5-G-5 District of Tabuco, Naga City	25273[bce]	480,000.00
06-06-85	Camarines Sur	116.71 sqm, residential lot, Lot 542 Zone 6, Brgy. Sta. Salud, Calabanga	ARP 97-042-0269[bceg]	52,519.50
06-06-86	Camarines Sur	49 sqm, residential lot, Lot 1619 Bo. Taban-Fundado, Libmanan	8186[bce]	39,200.00
06-06-87	Camarines Sur	14,978 sqm, residential lot, Lot 1-A Sitio Talisay, Brgy. Dolo, San Jose	8249[bce]	1,497,800.00
06-06-88	Camarines Sur	124 sqm, corner residential lot, Lot 30238 Brgy. San Nicolas, Canaman	ARP 97-017-422[bceg]	34,100.00
06-06-89	Camarines Sur	500 sqm, interior residential lot, Lot 12505-A Interior Labing-labing Street, Brgy. Sabang, Calabanga	ARP 97-025-0241[bceg]	100,000.00
06-06-90	Camarines Sur	346 sqm, residential lot, Lot 23 Block 24 Ramos/Carolina Subd. Brgy. Vinagre, Huyon-huyon, Tigaon	T-18826[be]	173,000.00
06-06-91	Camarines Sur	210 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 437 Brgy. Ombao, Polpog, Bula	ARP 97-016-340[bceg]	63,000.00
06-06-92	Camarines Sur	217 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 13 Brgy. Sta. Cruz, Calabanga	21545[bce]	65,100.00
06-06-93	Albay	1,530 sqm, residential lot, Lot 1932 Sitio Tinago, Brgy. Bacolod, Libon	PA-2087[bce]	459,000.00
06-06-94	Camarines Sur	240 sqm, residential lot with improvements, Lot 15132 Brgy. San Vicente, Calabanga	ARP 97-037-0067 (lot) ARP 97-037-0282 (bldg)[bceg]	440,000.00

RB BAAO (CAMARINES SUR), INC.

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	TITLE / TD	MIN. BID PRICE (P)
06-06-95	Camarines Sur	600 sqm residential lot, Lot 34, Brgy Tambo, Pamplona	6340[bce]	480,000.00
06-06-96	Camarines Sur	600 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 33, Brgy Tambo, Pamplona	6339[be]	480,000.00
06-06-97	Camarines Sur	189 sqm. residential lot, Brgy Pang-pang, Canaman	TD 6267 (ARP# 97-010-062)[beg]	376,000.00

MAYON SAVINGS AND LOAN BANK

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	TITLE / TD	MIN. BID PRICE (P)
06-06-98	Albay	295 sqm, residential corner lot with improvements, Lot 13 Bo. Sta. Cruz, Municipality of Ligao	T-116973[bce]	540,500.00
06-06-99	Albay	392 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 5 Block 1 Brgy. Inamnan Pequeño, Guinobatan	T-24928[be]	156,800.00
06-06-100(2)	Albay	900 sqm., residential lot, Lot 1038 Cabraran, Jovellar	PA-4514[be]	720,000.00
06-06-101(2)	Sorsogon	1,400 sqm., residential lot, San Vicente, Casilla	T-15315[be]	420,000.00

RB LIGAO (ALBAY), INC.

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	TITLE / TD	MIN. BID PRICE (P)
06-06-102	Camarines Sur	396 sqm, residential corner lot Lot 2032-p Cor. Mabini & Valencia Sts., Brgy. 2, Garchitorena	TD 97-022-00278[beg]	130,680.00
06-06-103	Camarines Sur	260 sqm, residential corner lot, Lot 2032 Mabini St., Brgy. II, Garchitorena	TD 97-022-00205[beg]	78,000.00

RB PIODURAN (ALBAY), INC.

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	TITLE / TD	MIN. BID PRICE (P)
06-06-104	Albay	375 sqm, residential lot, Lot 13 Block 11 Brgy. Caratagan, Pioduran	T-69979[be]	150,000.00

MUNICIPAL RB OF DEL GALLEGO (CAMARINES SUR), INC.

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	TITLE / TD	MIN. BID PRICE (P)
06-06-105	Camarines Sur	400 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 515-D-6 Brgy. Sinuknipan I, Del Gallego	TD 97-026100[beg]	180,000.00

MASBATE RURAL BANK (MASBATE), INC.

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	TITLE / TD	MIN. BID PRICE (P)
06-06-106	Masbate	133 sqm, residential lot Lot 2707-B (005) Brgy. San Agustin, Aroroy	TD 5973[beg]	15,960.00
06-06-107	Masbate	261 sqm, residential lot with improvements, Poblacion, Uson	TD 6237 (5002)[beg]	158,500.00
06-06-108	Masbate	720 sqm, residential lot, Lot 449 (014) Tinaclipan Road, Poblacion West, Milagros	TD 002-0392 (002-0683)[beg]	216,000.00
06-06-109	Masbate	145 sqm, residential lot, Lot 617 (008) Fuster St. Poblacion West, Milagros	TD 002-0684[bceg]	72,500.00

RB CANAMAN (CAMARINES SUR), INC.

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	TITLE / TD	MIN. BID PRICE (P)
06-06-110	Camarines Sur	522 sqm, residential lot, Lot 287, Cad 993-D, case 5 Brgy San Pascual, Tinambac	33148[be]	261,000.00
06-06-111	Camarines Sur	500 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 5, Block 1, Bo. San Ramon, Bula	582[be]	100,000.00
06-06-112	Camarines Sur	210 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 19-B, Brgy. Vinagro, Tigaon	28162[be]	84,000.00
06-06-113	Albay	938 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 1238-G, Brgy. Bonbon, Tabaco City	T-101354[bef]	656,600.00
06-06-114	Camarines Sur	1,000 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot B-2-B, Brgy. New Moriones, Ocampo	20065[be]	250,000.00
06-06-115	Camarines Sur	1,000 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot B-2-A, Brgy. Moriones, Ocampo	20656[be]	250,000.00
06-06-116	Camarines Sur	450 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 17, Blk. 15, La Paz Subd., Bo. Anayan, Pili	T-4068[be]	270,000.00
06-06-117	Camarines Sur	450 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 2245-B, Brgy. Bagumbayan, Libmanan	T-28379[be]	315,000.00

RB TIWI (ALBAY), INC.

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	TITLE / TD	MIN. BID PRICE (P)
06-06-118	Albay	289 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 15 Block 8, Sevel Subdivision Sipi, Daraga	T-69570[a]	322,800.00
06-06-119	Legaspi City	146 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 5755-C-5-H Brgy. Anmbay	28371[a]	65,700.00
06-06-120	Legaspi City	150 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 5755-C-5-I Brgy. Anmbay	28372[a]	67,500.00
06-06-121	Albay	230 sqm, vacant interior residential lot, Lot 6661-C-11 Brgy. Baclayon, Bacacay	TD 2002-02-015-00443[beg]	57,500.00

RB TABACO (ALBAY), INC.

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	TITLE / TD	MIN. BID PRICE (P)
06-06-122	Albay	300 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 10 Brgy. Tuburan, Ligao City	T-28266[b]	150,000.00
06-06-123	Albay	494 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 12 Brgy. Tuburan, Ligao City	T-28268[b]	247,000.00
06-06-124	Albay	300 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 21 Brgy. Tuburan, Ligao City	T-28277[b]	120,000.00
06-06-125	Albay	572 sqm, vacant interior residential lot, Lot 196-C Brgy. Sto. Cristo, Tabaco	T-60703[b]	200,200.00
06-06-126	Albay	696 sqm, residential lot, Lot 3922 Brgy. San Antonio, Tabaco	T-56634[be]	208,800.00
06-06-127	Albay	300 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 5 Block 6 Brgy. San Lorenzo, Tabaco	T-28531[b]	180,000.00

RB LABO (CAMARINES NORTE), INC.

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	TITLE / TD	MIN. BID PRICE (P)
06-06-128	Camarines Norte	381 sqm, interior residential lot, Embarcadero Sta. Cruz, Vinzons	TD 4304[beg]	57,150.00
06-06-129(2)	Camarines Norte	240 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 7 Blk 1 Villa Maria Subd., Brgy. Burabod, Daet	T-16176[be]	192,000.00
06-06-130(2)	Camarines Norte	300 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 12 B-1 Brgy. Gumamela, Labo	T-17970[bh]	165,000.00
06-06-131(2)	Camarines Norte	390 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 8 Brgy. Matacong, San Lorenzo Ruiz	TD 2529[beg]	78,000.00
06-06-132(2)	Camarines Norte	423 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 19 Brgy. Matacong, San Lorenzo Ruiz	TD 2530[beg]	84,600.00
06-06-133(2)	Camarines Norte	493 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 20 Brgy. Matacong, San Lorenzo Ruiz	TD 2531[beg]	98,600.00
06-06-134(2)	Camarines Norte	497 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 24-F-2-L, Poblacion, Sta. Elena	T-14459[be]	173,950.00
06-06-135(2)	Camarines Norte	300 sqm, residential lot, Lot 12 Block 5 Manlapaz Subd., Brgy. Gumamela (formerly Bakiad), Labo	T-22110[be]	165,000.00
06-06-136(2)	Camarines Norte	158 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 1 Block 2, Poblacion, Sta. Elena	T-24355[ee]	55,300.00
06-06-137(2)	Camarines Norte	161 sqm, vacant residential lot Lot 2 Block 2, Poblacion, Sta. Elena	T-24356[ee]	56,350.00
06-06-138(2)	Camarines Norte	161 sqm, vacant residential lot Lot 3 Block 2, Poblacion, Sta. Elena	T-24357[ee]	56,350.00
06-06-139(2)	Camarines Norte	161 sqm, vacant residential lot Lot 4 Block 2, Poblacion, Sta. Elena	T-24358[ee]	56,350.00
06-06-140(2)	Camarines Norte	160 sqm, vacant residential lot Lot 5 Block 2, Poblacion, Sta. Elena	T-24359[ee]	56,000.00
06-06-141(2)	Camarines Norte	217 sqm, vacant residential lot Lot 6 Block 2, Poblacion, Sta. Elena	T-24360[ee]	75,950.00
06-06-142(2)	Camarines Norte	230 sqm, vacant residential lot Lot 7 Block 2, Poblacion, Sta. Elena	T-24361[ee]	80,500.00
06-06-143(2)	Camarines Norte	158 sqm, vacant residential lot Lot 1 Block 1, Poblacion, Sta. Elena	T-24362[ee]	55,300.00
06-06-144(2)	Camarines Norte	160 sqm, vacant residential lot Lot 2 Block 1, Poblacion, Sta. Elena	T-24363[ee]	56,000.00
06-06-145(2)	Camarines Norte	160 sqm, vacant residential lot Lot 3 Block 1, Poblacion, Sta. Elena	T-24364[ee]	56,000.00
06-06-146(2)	Camarines Norte	160 sqm, vacant residential lot Lot 4 Block 1, Poblacion, Sta. Elena	T-24365[ee]	56,000.00
06-06-147(2)	Camarines Norte	182 sqm, vacant residential lot Lot 5 Block 1, Poblacion, Sta. Elena	T-24366[ee]	63,700.00
06-06-148(2)	Camarines Norte	176 sqm, vacant residential lot Lot 6 Block 1, Poblacion, Sta. Elena	T-24367[ee]	61,600.00
06-06-149(2)	Camarines Norte	207sqm, vacant residential lot Lot 7 Block 1 Poblacion, Sta. Elena	T-24368[ee]	72,450.00

PACIFIC BANKING CORPORATION

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	TITLE / TD	MIN. BID PRICE (P)
06-06-151	Albay	300 sqm, vacant residential subdivision lot, Lot 4, Blk 9 Brgy. Naga, Tiwi	T-45062[ae]	75,000.00

JULY 4, 2006

PACIFIC BANKING CORPORATION

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	TITLE / TD	MIN. BID PRICE (P)
06-06-150	Davao City	386 sqm, residential lot, Lot A, Brgy. Dumoy, Talomo District	T-92475[a]	386,000.00
06-06-152	Bacolod City	1,000 sqm, residential subdivision lot with improvements, Lot 4, Blk 14 Saturn St., [illegible] Subd.	T-268115[ee]	800,000.00

MOLAVE RURAL BANK (ZAMBOANGA DEL SUR), INC.

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	TITLE / TD	MIN. BID PRICE (P)
06-06-153	Zamboanga del Sur	297 sqm, interior residential lot Lot 343-D-25 Brgy Sta. Clara Crossing, Naga, Zamboanga Sibugay	T-19368[ac]	44,550.00

RB ABRA DE ILOG, INC.

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	TITLE / TD	MIN. BID PRICE (P)
06-06-154	Occidental Mindoro	216 sqm, bank premises, Lot 4-A-1 Vasquez St., Poblacion (formerly Barrio Lawaan), Abra de Ilog	T-10331[ae]	209,600.00

RB LILIO (LAGUNA), INC.

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	TITLE / TD	MIN. BID PRICE (P)
06-06-155	Rizal	235 sqm, vacant residential and lot, Lot 2 Block 3, San Miguel Subdivision, Brgy Muzon, Taytay	559735[a]	352,500.00
06-06-156	Laguna	149 sqm, residential lot, Lot 2208, Cad 427-D Barangay San Roque, Poblacion, Victoria	T-228259[a]	223,500.00
06-06-157	Laguna	133 sqm, residential lot with improvements, Laot A-1,Barangay IV, Poblacion, Sta. Cruz	T-220744[ac]	968,800.00
06-06-158	Laguna	102 sqm, residential lot, Lot 449 J. Calles St. Barangay II, Poblacion, Sta. Cruz	T-228258[a]	612,000.00
06-06-159	Caloocan City	300 sqm, vacant residential lot Lot 9 Block 25 Road 44 St., Congress Village, Brgy. Bagumbong	220914[ah]	540,000.00
06-06-160	Laguna	200 sqm, vacant residential lot, Lot 1077-E, Brgy. Magdapio, Pagsanjan	TD 99-19-011-00665[aeg]	80,000.00
06-06-161	Laguna	273 sqm, interior residential lot, Lot 8563-G-1 Brgy. Bungkol, Liliw	T-99658[b]	136,500.00
06-06-162	Laguna	500 sqm, residential lot, Lot 1267-pt, Barangay of Sto. Angel Central, Sta. Cruz	TD 00616[beg]	400,000.00
06-06-163	Laguna	215 sqm, residential lot, Lot 3, Barangay Sto. Angel Central, Sta. Cruz	T-142959[a]	430,000.00

RB VICTORIA (LAGUNA), INC.

CODE	LOCATION	DESCRIPTION	TITLE / TD	MIN. BID PRICE (P)
06-06-164	Laguna	286 sqm, residential lot, Lot 727, Cad 427-D A. Herradura St., Brgy. Nanhaya, Victoria	OCT P-7545[bc]	429,000.00
06-06-165	Laguna	274 sqm, residential lot, Lot 711, Cad 427-D A. Herradura St., Brgy. Nanhaya, Victoria	OCT P-3146[bc]	411,000.00
06-06-166	Laguna	269 sqm/16 sqm (two parcels), residential lot with improvements, Lot 1574/1575 M.L.Quezon Street, Poblacion, Victoria	O-2436[bc]	723,500.00

a - consolidated
b - redemption period lapsed but title not yet transferred in the name of the bank
c - with lessee/ tenants/ informal dwellers/caretaker
e - with unpaid realty taxes
f - with Notice of Tax Lien
g - untitled
h - original owner's copy of TCT missing; for reconstitution
j - with Notice of Levy/adverse claims
l - no right of way

CONDITIONS OF BID

1. The sale shall be for CASH and on "As-Is" basis. The amount of bid shall not be lower than the minimum bid price.
2. The Liquidator sells only whatever rights, interest and participation the banks have on the property/ies and the bidder is charged with full knowledge of the nature and extent of said rights, interest and participation. The bidder acknowledges that he/she has examined the property/ies and accepts disclaimer of any warranty, implied or otherwise.
3. The bidder represents to have full knowledge of any and all unpaid real property taxes due on the properties and holds him/herself solely liable for the payment thereof.
4. Bids shall be accepted from Filipino citizens only. If the bidder is a corporation, association, partnership or other form of organization, Filipino ownership must be at least sixty percent (60%). In the latter case, the bid form shall be accompanied by a certified copy of the organization's certificate of registration.

   In cases where the documents submitted by a lone bidder are deficient, the Committee may at its discretion declare the bid the most advantageous and allow the bidder to complete the deficiency not later than 5:00 p.m. of the day following the bidding date; otherwise, the bid deposit shall be forfeited.
5. The bid proposal must be in the prescribed form and shall be signed by the bidder as follows:
   a. In case of individual bidders, the bidder him/herself shall sign the bid proposal or his/her representative duly authorized in a Special Power of Attorney (SPA) executed by the bidder and attached to the bid proposal. Proposals coming from organizations not registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission shall be considered as individual offers, with all the officers/ members signing the offer and deciding as one
   b. In case of duly registered corporations, associations, partnerships and other forms of organization, the person duly designated by the Board of Directors or the Partners to act for and on behalf of the organization with full powers and authority to participate in the bidding shall sign the bid proposal. The Secretary's Certificate executed by the corporate/board secretary, or its equivalent, shall be attached to the bid proposal.

   In cases where the documents submitted by a lone bidder are defective, the Committee may at its discretion declare the bid the most advantageous and allow the bidder to correct the defect not later than 5:00 p.m. of the day following the bidding date; otherwise, the bid deposit shall be forfeited.
6. Each bid shall be accompanied by a bond/deposit equivalent to at least ten percent (10%) of the submitted bid, which shall be in the form of Cash or Manager's Cashier's Check payable to Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation for the account of the bank/s under liquidation. Bids whose bond/deposit are in the form of personal and/or corporate checks shall be disqualified. The bid bond/deposit shall be non-interest bearing.
7. The bid proposal form, together with the signed Conditions of Bid, the bid bond deposit and the required attachments must be in a sealed envelope and addressed to the R/L ROPOA Disposal Committee. The sealed envelope must have the bidder's signature across its flap. Bids shall be accepted starting at 9:00 a.m (PDIC time) but not later than 1:55 p.m. (PDIC time) on June 27 and July 4, 2006 for the Bicol Region and Metro Manila bidding, respectively There shall be no extension on the submission of bids.
8. Withdrawal/cancellation of bids shall not be allowed the moment the bidding is declared open. Bids shall be opened in the presence of the attending bidders or their authorized representatives. All bids below the minimum bid price shall be disqualified immediately after the opening.
9. In the event of a tie for the highest bid, the Committee will resort to an open bidding (viva voce) on the same day to be participated in by the tied bidders only.
   9.1 The viva voce bidding shall start not later than one and a half hours after the main public bidding.
   9.2 The starting bid price in the viva voce bidding shall be equivalent to the tied price plus one thousand pesos (P1,000.00).
   9.3 After the first open/verbal bid is made, the Chairperson, who shall act as the Bid Master, adds the increment required and asks the tied bidders if there is a bid at the new price. A bidder raises his/her hand if he/she wants to make a bid at the new price announced by the Bid Master
   9.4 The incremental bid, which is the amount to be added to the last bid price, shall not be less than P500.00.
   9.5 The process continues until the last bid is declared winner in the open bidding after the Bid Master has counted three times after the announcement of the last bid price.
   9.6 The winning bidder in the viva voce bidding shall pay additional bid deposit equivalent to 10% of the difference between the last bid price and the tied bid. The additional bid deposit shall be paid immediately or not later than 5:00 p.m. of the following day, June 28 and July 5, 2006, for the Bicol Region and Metro Manila bidding, respectively, and may be remitted through the PDIC on-line collection system with the Philippine National Bank.

   Failure to pay the additional bid deposit shall result in the cancellation of the award and forfeiture of all payments made in favor of the bank.
   9.7 All other provisions in the Conditions of Bid for the main bidding shall apply to the viva voce bidding.
10. If there is only one complying bid, the Committee shall declare the lone bid as the winning bid.

    A complying bid is the bid that meets the minimum bid price, accompanied by the required bid deposit in Cash or Manager's/Cashier's Check, and all the other conditions stated herein.
11. The Certificate of Award shall be issued by the Committee to the winning bidder after the public bidding.
12. The winning bidder shall pay the balance of the bid price, after application of the bid bond/ deposit, not later than July 4 and July 11, 2006, for the Bicol Region and Metro Manila bidding, respectively. If the winning bidder fails to pay the balance within the said period, the award shall automatically be cancelled and his/her bid bond/deposit forfeited in favor of the bank.

    The bid bond/deposit of the losing bidder/s shall be returned as soon as possible after the bidding.
13. A "Deed of Absolute Sale" covering the property/ies sold shall be executed within ten (10) working days from receipt of full payment of the purchase price.
14. The winning bidder shall respect the leasehold rights existing on the property/ies, if any, including the required period of notice of termination of the lease contract.
15. The winning bidder shall assume the payment of appropriate taxes, fees, charges and expenses in connection with the sale of the property/ies and the transfer of the title to the winning bidder including, but not limited to, capital gains tax, creditable withholding tax, documentary stamp tax, notarial fees, registration expenses, legal and research fund fees, entry fees and such other fees and expenses incidental to the execution and registration of the Absolute Deed of Sale.
16. All accrued taxes and charges on the property/ies, and those accruing after receipt of the Certificate of Award, which shall be issued on the day of the bidding, such as, but not limited to, realty taxes, electric and water bills, as well as special assessments, shall be for the account of the winning bidder.
17. The winning bidder shall undertake the responsibility of acquiring and maintaining peaceful possession and enjoyment of the property without seeking the assistance of PDIC.
18. For real estate properties whose titles are not yet transferred in the name of the bank, consolidation of title shall be undertaken by the winning bidder and expenses for the same shall be for his/her account.
19. The Committee reserves the right to reject any or all bids; to accept the bid most advantageous to the bank; and to amend any of the above conditions or waive any formality in the bidding process as it sees fit at any time prior to the submission of sealed bids. The Committee likewise reserves the right to withdraw any of the properties from the bidding at any time before 2:00 p.m. (PDIC time) on June 27 and July 4, 2006, for the Bicol Region and Metro Manila public bidding, respectively.
20. Violation of or non-compliance with the above conditions shall disqualify a bid, unless otherwise provided under paragraph 4 & 5 hereof.
21. All decisions of the Committee shall be final and may not be subject of appeal.

Bid forms and copies of the Conditions of Bid may be secured free of charge from the following.

Metro Manila bidding		abovecited PDIC address
Bicol Region bidding		
	Evelyn de Guzman	G/F King's Bldg. 3, Rizal & Elizondo Sts., Brgy. No. 30 Legaspi City (in front of PNB Legaspi)
	Asuncion Segui	Banco Rural Sorsogon, Rizal St., Sorsogon City
	Beth Subang	RB Canaman, Baras, Canaman, Camarines Sur
	Eleuterio Caceres	RB Talisay, Poblacion, Talisay, Camarines Norte

For further information, interested bidders may call telephone number 841-4000 local 4729, 28 or 31 In case of occurrence of flood, storm or other natural calamities that may result in the cancellation of holding the public bidding on the published date, such public bidding shall be held on the next working day at the same time and venue

RL ROPOA DISPOSAL COMMITTEE

(PDI- June 7 & 15, 2006)

BUSINESS

Rising rates, weak peso seen making business tougher for PLDT

By Daxim L. Lucas

RISING INTEREST RATES around the world, and eventually locally, will adversely affect revenues of the country's largest telecommunications firm as people adjust their spending patterns.

In an interview with reporters, Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT) chair Manuel V. Pangilinan said local interest rates had yet to keep pace with the upward trend in borrowing costs globally—a phenomenon that had pushed local prices of goods and services higher.

Because policymakers have resisted the market's push toward higher interest rates, fund managers are now shifting their assets to currencies that offer greater returns.

"We are seeing negative interest rates where inflation is higher than the annual interest rates," he said. "That has led to some degree of capital flight which has weakened the peso."

Pangilinan explained that a weak peso against the US dollar would feed inflation which, in turn, erodes the purchasing power of the Filipino consumer.

PLDT's revenues will also suffer, he warned.

During the company's stockholders' meeting the other day, Pangilinan raised his forecast for PLDT's "core earnings"—net income less one-time gains from foreign exchange rate fluctuations—to P32 billion from the previous estimate of P31 billion by yearend.

He said the business environ-

RISING/B4

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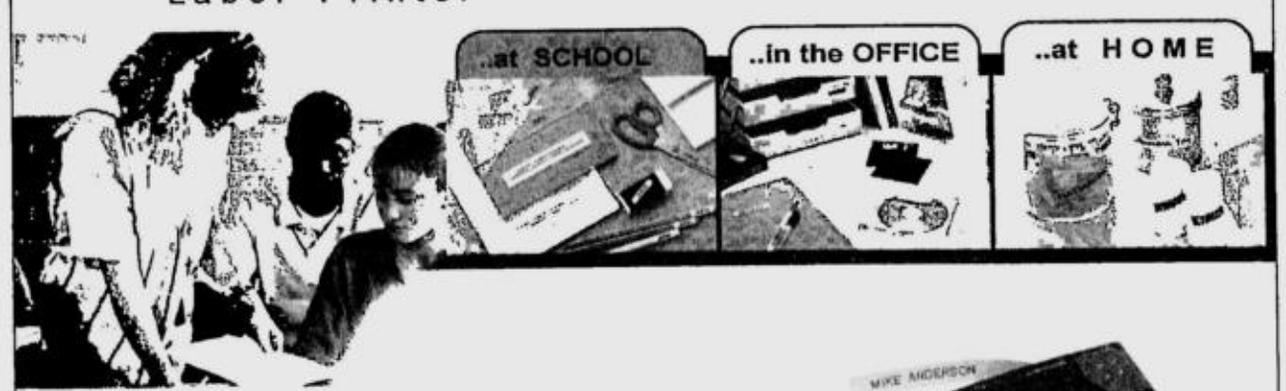

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3-yr T-bond rate up 62.5 bps to 10.37%

Likely US rate hike affects local mart

By Michelle V. Remo

THE RATE FOR THE 3-YEAR TREASURY bonds climbed to 10.375 percent in yesterday's auction, as the prospects of a higher US interest rate influenced domestic rates.

The new rate for the government's three-year borrowing was 62.5 basis points higher than the 9.75 percent in May last year, the last time 3-year bonds were offered.

"Globally, all rates have increased and spreads have widened, and the Philippines is not exempt from this trend," National Treasurer Omar Cruz said in a briefing after yesterday's auction.

The Bureau of the Treasury's auction committee accepted only P2.13 billion worth of bids, lower than its programmed borrowing of P3.5 billion and the P6.01 billion worth of bids submitted.

Cruz said the partial rejection of bids was intended to align the rate on the 3-year bond with those in the secondary market. He said done deals for the 3-year bonds recently settled at between 10.2 and 10.3 percent in the secondary market.

Had the BTr accepted P3.5 billion worth of bids, the rate for the 3-year bonds could have risen to as high as 10.5 percent.

Investors and market participants expect the US Federal Reserve to implement another increase in its interest rate, which currently stands at 5 percent, following statement by Fed chair Ben Bernanke on the Fed's resolve to fight inflation.

An increase in US interest rate makes securities issued by emerging economies, including the Philippines, less attractive as risk-averse investors would prefer to invest in US issues.

Cruz said the BTr did not mind allowing interest rates to go up as long as the increase would come higher demand for bonds.

He noted that the P6.01 billion worth of tenders showed enough interest for the 3-year bonds, considering that the government's original debt offering was only at P3.5 billion.

Century spending up to ₱40B to develop former IS property

PROPERTY DEVELOPER CENTURY Properties Inc. said it would invest as much as P40 billion in the development of the former International School Property, which the firm bought from the government for P1.432 billion.

Jose E.B Antonio, company chair, told reporters that Century Properties was planning to put up an information technology zone, as well as residential and commercial buildings, on the 48,832-square meter property.

In a briefing after the signing of the sales contract yesterday,

Antonio said Century Properties would immediately ask the local government of Makati City to convert or rezone the property from institutional into a mixed-use land.

He said the company was confident of having the zoning changed immediately after it got the commitment of Makati City officials.

The government will retain ownership of the property until Century pays the purchase price, which was higher than the floor price of P1.186 billion, in full, the Department of Finance said.

The DOF said Century Properties paid 10 percent of the purchase price yesterday, and would remit another 10 percent within 90 days. The balance would be paid within one year.

Michelle V. Remo

Highlands declares 5% cash dividend

HIGHLANDS PRIME Inc., the listed property development firm majority owned by the SM Group, yesterday declared a 5-percent cash dividend or P0.05 centavos per share amounting to P112.3 million.

Stockholders of record as of July 14, 2006 are entitled to the dividend which will be paid on or before Aug. 9, 2006.

In a report to the stockholders, HPI president Antonio A. Henson said the company posted a 30-percent increase in gross profit to P295 million in 2005 from P228 million in 2004.

With management's initiatives to efficiently manage cost and expenditures, HPI posted a 37-percent rise in net income to P173.1 million from P126.4 million in 2004.

Share price reached a high of P3.60 during the year, from the initial public offering price of P2.13 per share.

He said in the next five years, the company would continue to provide exciting, innovative and quality products for its niche market.

He said HPI would look at a few infrastructure investments, including new roads to Highlands, in a bid to make its projects more attractive.

One of the firm's existing projects is the log-cabin inspired residential condominium development in Tagaytay Highlands.

Business backs bill on BOT law revision

A BILL SEEKING THE ESTABLISHment of a Build-Operate Transfer Authority (BOT Authority) is gaining wide support from the private sector.

The Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) said the plan would simplify the process in implementing BOT projects.

"Anything that will facilitate, simplify and accelerate the development of major infrastructure projects in the country we will support," said PCCI president Donald Dee in an interview.

However, Dee called for a thorough study of the bill to see whether there would really be improvements in the existing BOT process.

At present, BOT projects go through the Investment Coordinating Committee of the National Economic and Development Authority. There are several stages of approvals and reviews.

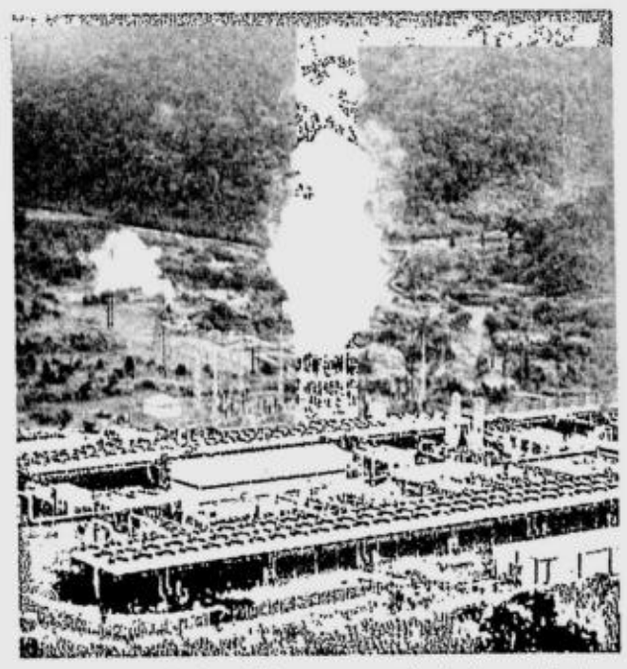
The proposed creation of the BOT Authority is contained in House Bill 5002. Under this, the BOT Authority will oversee and regulate amendments to approved contracts to avoid delays in the implementation of the projects.

CalEnergy hands over geothermal plant to RP government

Today marks CalEnergy International's formal handover of the 125-megawatt Upper Mahiao geothermal plant in Leyte to the government-owned Philippine National Oil Company-Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC), as the build-operate and transfer contract between the two companies expires this month.

After 10 remarkable years of operating the geothermal facility, CalEnergy has demonstrated excellence in power plant management, safe plant operation and corporate citizenship.

CALENERGY INTERNATIONAL LTD.
A MIDAMERICAN ENERGY HOLDINGS COMPANY AFFILIATE



The Upper Mahiao Plant
- Located in the Tongonan geothermal reservation in Leyte.
- The plant had been operated by CalEnergy for the past 10 years under a build-operate and transfer (BOT) contract.
- One of three geothermal facilities operated by CalEnergy in Leyte. The other two plants (the Mahanagdong and Malitbog plants) are scheduled to be turned over to the government in 2007.

Operational Highlights
- The plant has been well-maintained and has operated at around 99.50 % availability from the time it started at full capacity operation in 1999, a performance that compares well with the world's best geothermal plants.
- The plant also boasts 10 years of safe plant operations, with no major operational incidents.

Safety Milestones
- Together with CalEnergy's two other Leyte geothermal plants, the Upper Mahiao plant recorded the 2 million safe man-hours milestone in 2005 and are well on their way to achieving the 2.5 million mark by the end of July 2006. This safety record is the result of CalEnergy's relentless effort to develop a culture of safety consciousness.
- The three Leyte plants were awarded by the Department of Labor and Employment the "Gawad Kaligtasan at Kalusugan" Institutional Award for its exemplary compliance with Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Standards in Electricity, Gas and Water Industry.

Employee and Community Relations
- As early as 1999 CalEnergy developed and implemented a broad and intensive training for its employees to prepare them for the end of the BOT.
- To make them competitive at job markets here and abroad, CalEnergy worked with the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) for the skills certification training of operations and maintenance (O & M) employees. All O & M employees have been certified by TESDA. A number of them have been certified at skill competency levels beyond their job requirements or in more than one trade or craft.
- Employees were also trained on a voluntary basis in entrepreneurship and business to help them develop options other than employment after the BOT.
- Approximately 85% of CalEnergy's Upper Mahiao O & M employees have been absorbed by PNOC-EDC. The other employees have been hired for overseas assignments and still others have already established and are operating their own business.
- As part of its commitment to its project impact communities, CalEnergy invested millions of pesos in community projects benefiting the people of Kananga and Ormoc City which host CalEnergy's three geothermal power plants.
- In the municipality of Kananga, CalEnergy has built and refurbished more than 60 classrooms and has implemented scholarship and skills-training programs for the out-of-school youths.
- In partnership with Gawad Kalinga and the municipality of Kananga, CalEnergy has built a housing village that benefited 40 families in the municipality.
- CalEnergy has also energized 34 sitios in Kananga by contributing PhP 0.01/kwh of energy generated, under the Energy Regulation 1-94 program of the Department of Energy.

"Any job worth doing is worth doing right. As simple as it sounds, that's the way we see it, which is why our growth and financial goals will always be secondary to the safety of our operations, the satisfaction of our customers and good stewardship of our environment. We believe it is within our power to help shape a better, safer energy future for everyone we serve."

David L. Sokol, Chairman and CEO
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WHERE the dining is fine /D2

LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

sms feedback: inquirer life name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 386 (Smart) or email us at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

Father's favorite Spanish recipes

HEROES. WE ALL HAVE ONE...THAT larger-than-life character who leaves a mark, and someone who always seems to have God on his side. In our case, we didn't have to look too far. When God sent us a father, he also sent us our hero.

Joe Aspiras was many things to many people, but to us, he was just Dad. It has been seven years since he left us. Though time heals, the longing continues.

Just now, I woke up missing him. I crave the little joys his person brings—the infectious laughter, the kind words, the tight hugs, the sense of humor, the childlike pranks, the warmth and beauty of his human spirit!

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

Today, I honor you, Dad, and I thank you for many things: for allowing me to dream, for the memories, for having enriched my life so, and, most of all, for loving me.

In behalf of mom and my siblings, know that there will always be a special place for you in our hearts, where the sun always shines and, in the warmth of its glow, you continue to live on, forever. We miss you! We love you! To our hero Sunshine Joe, Happy Father's Day!

Dad had two life-long romances, my mother and Spain, for its culture and, most especially, its food. I am sharing two of his favorite Spanish recipes as prepared by Mom. I hope you find time to prepare them on Father's Day to honor your own personal heroes.

JOE Aspiras

My dad had two life-long romances: my mother and Spain, for its culture and its food

Cocido

½ c extra-virgin olive oil
1.5 k beef for stewing
350 g *jamón serrano*
500 g slab bacon, Santis
3 good quality *chorizos* (Terry's -El Vedado/Santis-Pamplona)
¼ c garlic, chopped
3 onions, quartered
½ k tomatoes, quartered
1/3 c parsley
3 leeks, cut into 2-inch lengths
1 large can of *garbanzos*, drained
Generous pinch of saffron
1 ½ tsp Spanish paprika
1 chicken, whole or cut into pieces
3 large potatoes, peeled, cut in 2
3 carrots, peeled and cut in 2
1 whole cabbage, quartered
Parsley

Heat olive oil in a large stock pot. Sear beef, *jamon*, bacon, *chorizo*. Meats may be left whole for presentation purposes or cut into cubes.

Remove meats, sauté garlic, onions, tomato, parlsey, white part of leeks. Return meats, into stock pot. Add saffron, paprika, *garbanzos* and just enough water to cover meats.

Simmer over low heat until beef is tender. When beef is tender, add chicken, potatoes, carrots. Continue to simmer until chicken is almost done.

Add cabbage and green part of leeks. Season with salt and pepper.

Serve meat and vegetables on a platter with heated Spanish tomato sauce with olive oil on the side if you wish.

Serve soup separately.

Bacalao

1 c extra-virgin olive oil
½ c onion, chopped
¼ c garlic
1 c fresh tomatoes
1 small canned tomato, seeded, chopped, drained
½ c tomato purée
1 k (I like using the boneless fillets of Terry's)
1 c extra-virgin olive oil
2 roasted bell peppers, peeled, sliced into strips
1-2 c potatoes, cubed and boiled until slightly tender
Pepper, to taste

Heat up olive oil and sauté garlic, onions, fresh tomatoes until tomatoes are soft. Add *bacalao*, canned tomato, tomato purée. Simmer over very low heat for about an hour and a half, until *bacalao* is tender. The longer you simmer over low heat, the better.

Add 1 c extra-virgin olive oil, 1 roasted bell pepper and potatoes. Let simmer 30 minutes over low heat. Season to taste.

Transfer to a baking dish. Garnish with remaining roasted bell pepper. Dribble with olive oil.

Bake on a pre-heated 350°F oven uncovered for 20-30 minutes.

Preparing the *bacalao*:

The day before cooking, wash fish in running water to remove salt. Soak in water overnight, doing 3-4 water changes during the soaking process. Flake *bacalao* and cook as per recipe above.

Pinoy specialties

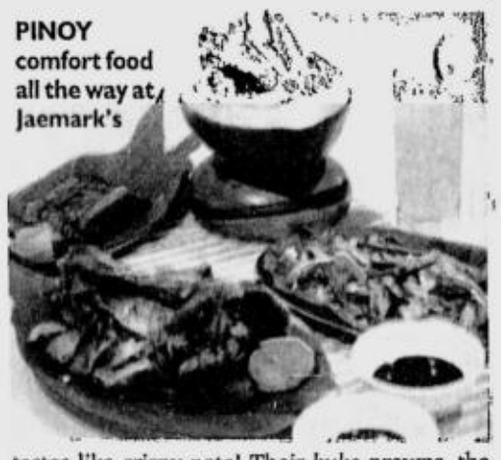
I'm Danny, a fresh graduate and a new employee. My question is: Where can I treat my dad on Father's Day? It also is my first salary treat. He likes Filipino food but since it is my first salary, it is not much. Please suggest a new reasonable place.

Former PBA commissioner Jun Bernardino turned restaurateur with friends Pepot Romualdez, Ricky Palou, Tony Liao, Moying Martelino and, of course, Mars Reyes of Joseph and Jaemark's. Remember that little restaurant along White Plains and the one at the Cuneta Astrodome that served great tuna? Well, it just opened anew at 2/F, Petron Station along C-5 (tels. 8281061/8281514).

My sister Babot claims their deep-fried tuna tastes like crispy *pata*! Their *buko* prawns, the tuna belly and the *panga* are yummy as well. Pinoy comfort food all the way!

To you, Danny, welcome to the real world! And to your dad and to all the fathers out there, for all the love and comfort they bring, Happy Father's Day!

PINOY comfort food all the way at Jaemark's



(I am starting my Buffet Series. If you love entertaining and cooking for a small crowd, this is perfect for you! Recipes are great for the weekend cook and those who own small catering establishments. I am also repeating my Gourmet Cucinera 1 for household cooks. Call 9289296 or 6335162.)

E-mail the author at raspiras@inquirer.com.ph

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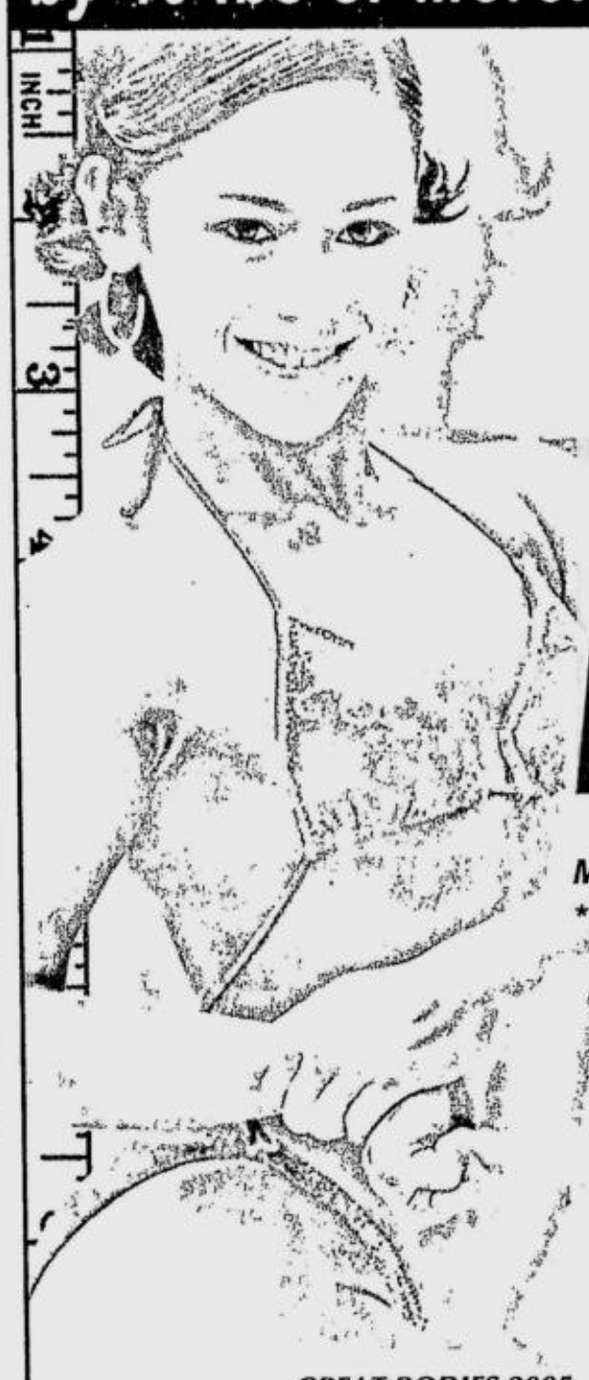

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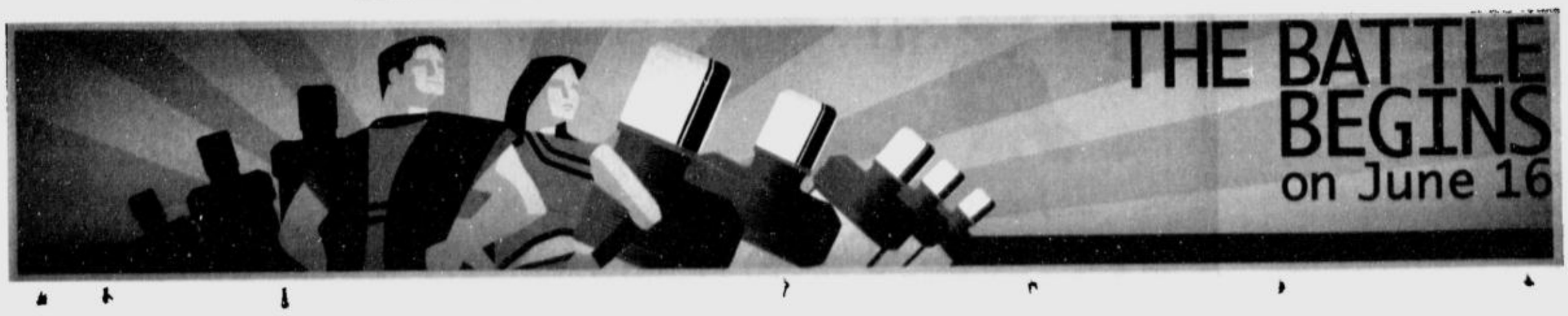


TREAT dad to a hearty Surf and Turf meal at Spiral, Hotel Philippine Plaza, and get a chance to win a 26-inch LCD television from Samsung. Spoil him with big portions of lobsters and steaks. The whole family will also enjoy an array of specialties from Spiral's 2,500-sq m live cooking stations consisting of South East Asian, Western grills, Mediterranean, Indian, Japan, Korean and Chinese cuisine. As an added treat to dad, he can enjoy unlimited beer from San Miguel. The first 200 dads will receive a 100-ml ISM fragrance by Inno Sotto courtesy of Rustan's. Call 5515555 loc. 1086 or 6988.

BURGOO American Bar and Restaurant treats all dads to Shrimps and Ribs Platter, a combination of barbecued baby back ribs and Cajun-spiced prawns, served with French fries and grilled corn-on-the-cob. For every order of this special dish, dad automatically gets a complimentary white or red wine and he gets to take home mugs from Anchor and Lipton tea bags. Burgoo recently opened at the 2/L, South Wing, Main Mall, Mall of Asia. Call 9277424, 8981815, 6875254, 9127939 and 5560091.

From 8-course Chinese dinner to surf-and-turf buffet: Wh

PEKING Garden offers a set menu for 12 persons at P12,300+ this Father's Day. It includes eight main courses with four kinds of appetizers, Shark's Fin Soup with Winter Melon, Bamboo Pith and Dried Scallops, Peking Duck, Crispy Rice Prawns, Steamed Lapu-lapu, Braised Fish-maw with Black Mushrooms, Buttered Baked Crabs with Shanghai Rice Cakes, and Steamed Supreme Soup and Pork Dumplings, plus fresh fruit platter for dessert. It is open daily for lunch and dinner. It is located at 2/L, Glorietta 2, Ayala Center, Makati City. Call 8179066/9067.

THE OLD Swiss Inn celebrates Father's Day with a special tribute to dads. Lucky dads who dine at the Old Swiss Inn branches on this special day will have the chance to bring home a BMW for an entire weekend. The Old Swiss Inn branches are at The Garden Plaza Hotel & Suites, 1030 Belen St., Paco, Manila (5213002, 5262739, 522483 loc. 115); G/F, Somerset Olympia, Makati Ave. cor. Tomas Morato St., Makati City (8188251, 8180098, 8121010 loc. 511 to 512); and 2/F, BMW Autozentrum Lounge, Commerce Ave. cor. Madrigal Ave., Ayala Alabang (8092326).

Dads who will dine in any of **Mandarin Oriental's** restaurants on Father's Day get a chance to win a gift from "Pick-A-Prize," promo which includes Aramis fragrances from Rustan's Essences, gift certificates from Menage Salon and sterling silver charms from Michelis Jewelry. This June, Globe Platinum cardholders can enjoy special treats and dads get a complimentary Businessman's Lunch at P1,100 + or Degustation Dinner Set Menu at P2,400+ with a minimum of three paying adults. The offer goes with a choice of complimentary bottle of red or white wine.

EDSA Shangri-La Hotel offers a smorgasbord of mouthwatering dishes from the hotel's fine dining outlets: a taste traditional Japanese dishes at Senju; classic pasta dishes at Paparazzi; and authentic Chinese cuisine at Summer Palace. There's an array of Indian, Japanese, Chinese, Filipino and Western cuisine at Heat. Dads who dine will receive a gift from Rustan's Essenses. Call 6338888 loc. 2738 to 39.

THE BELLEVUE Hotel presents Father's Day Blowout promo. You can avail of the P4,000+ per night room rate (executive suite) from June 16-18 and get a 20-percent discount on dining outlets plus a welcome discount card on selected items at Rustan's Department Store that will be given to customers. Other perks include breakfast buffet at the Cafe D' Asie for two, free use of swimming pool and gym facilities. There's a special Father's Day Brunch Buffet for only P795+ and special giveaways from Wilcon, Travel Club and Globe for dads and diners as well. Call 7718181.

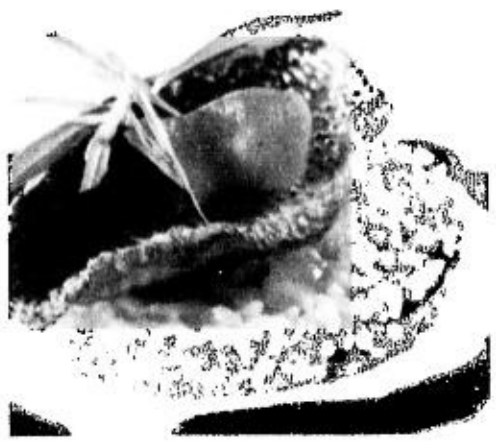
THE RENAISSANCE Makati Hotel's coffee shop offers lunch and dinner buffets of International and Asian favorites at P1,188+ per person. The master chefs of Bocarinos also prepared a special Father's Day set menu of continental cuisine for lunch and dinner at P1,380+ per person. The Emperor Court offers a selection of lunch and dinner set menus for a minimum of four persons at P788+ to P1,288+ per person. A complimentary wine will be given for a minimum purchase of P3,200+. Call 8116888.

CENTURY PARK Hotel's Café in the Park offers lunch and dinner buffet with Western and Asian fare for P895+ (adult) and P500+ (kids, 4-12 years old). Unsui offers authentic Japanese specialties including Lapu-lapu Usuzukuri, Gyoku-Sui, Tori-Negi Roll, Shiraou, Enoki and Mitsuba Tempura. The Deli Snack offers Cherry Mousse Gateau, the featured Father's Day cake, for only P700+. Call 5285855/5856/5907.

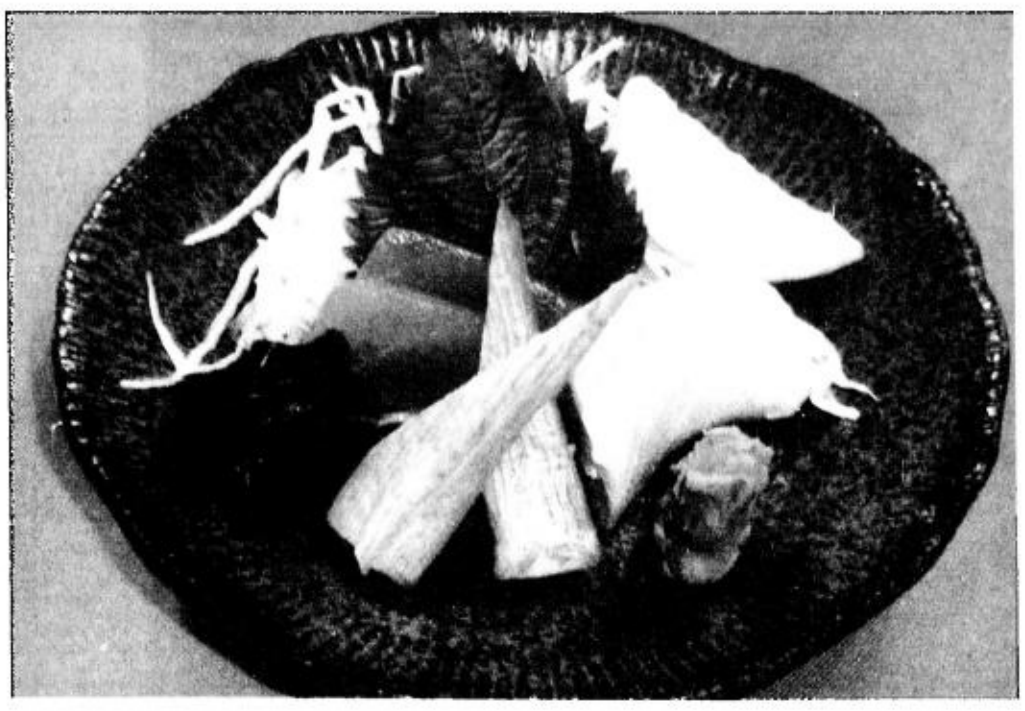
THE RICHMONDE Hotel's Grill showcases a delectable appetizers and cold items like sushi, sashimi, Smoked Seafood, Chinese cold cuts, Mixed Seafood Ceviche, Creamy Tomato and Cheese Baked Mussels and Thai Beef Salad with Crispy Rice Noodles. Main dishes include Pan Fried Salmon Tornedos, Grilled Lamb Chops with Rosemary, Roasted Whole Devil Chicken, Breaded Beef in Creamy Spinach Purée, Oysters Kilpatrick and Prime Rib au Jus. The buffet is priced at P900+. All fathers dining at the Grill will get a chance to win gift certificates in a special raffle draw. Call 6387777 or 6898419.

SORABOL Korean BBQ, the contemporary Korean casual dining restaurant that serves authentic Korean cuisine and Asian noodles treats dads this Father's Day. Customers can avail of a free three-piece Lemon Chicken Meal for every P500 purchase at the SM Megamall and Greenhills branches. The restaurant's best-selling dishes include the BBQ chicken, kimchi (the best-known Korean food), *chapchae*, beef *bolgogi*, BBQ squid and noodle soups (spinach, egg, *soba*, *udon*). Sorabol outlets are located at the UG/L, SM Megamall Bldg. B and G/F, Connecticut Strip, Center Car Park Bldg, Greenhills Shopping Cen-

JADE GARDEN Cantonese Restaurant offers a special set menu for 12 persons, a grand lauriat consisting of exotic dishes like Suckling Pig Combination, Braised Shark's Fin with Seafood Soup, Peking duck, Pink Lapu-lapu sprinkled with dried rose petals, Grilled Prawns with Special Sauce, Stir-fried Scallops with Broccoli, Pan-fried Crabs with Thai Chili Sauce, Rice Rolls with Dried Shrimps in light soy sauce and fresh fruit platter at P12,300+. The restaurant is open daily for lunch and dinner. Jade Garden is at Greenbelt 1, Ayala Center, Makati City. Call 8922319 or 8124548.



HOTEL InterContinental offers special dining treats and room packages for dads. A brunch buffet spread of local and international dishes at Café Jeepney await dad and the entire family. Prince Albert Rotisserie offers set lunch menu for only P2,200+ per person. A special gift from Solo Leowe will be given to dads who will dine on Father's Day. Call 8159711.



KIMPURA offers a wide selection of traditional Japanese dishes. On Father's Day, the restaurant treats dads with a complimentary Sashimi Teaser plate. Kimpura is open daily for lunch and dinner. It is located at Greenhills Shopping Center (beside Uni-Mart), San Juan (7218816), and 2/L, Glorietta 2, Ayala Center, Makati City (8924456).

re to take Dad on his special day

ter. Call 6334241 (SM Megamall) and 7271547 (Greenhills).

UNTIL JUNE 30, dads who dine at any **Super Bowl of China** and **Big Buddha** restaurants, will get one bottle of free beer (choice of San Mig Light or Pale Pilsen) for a minimum group of five persons (maximum of two dads per group). On June 18, dads will receive one free Chris Sports discount card (minimum dine-in group of five persons, one discount card per group). Super Bowl of China recently opened at the SM Mall of Asia. Big Buddha restaurants have branches at the 2/L, Greenbelt 3 and Blue Wave Macapagal Avenue. Super Bowl of China offers delivery service, call 7378888.

ZHONGNANNHAI Chinese Bistro offers two special set menus this Father's Day. Menu A includes appetizers, soup, five main dishes, dessert and a Martini glass of Chilled Sweetened Mango Sago with Pomelo, good for five persons at P3,388+. Menu B includes appetizers, soup, dim sum, main courses, dessert for P2,888+ for five persons. ZNH Chinese Bistro is at Greenbelt 2. Call 7581111 for reservations.

KENNY Rogers' Roasters offers Chicken Sampler for P499 and the Chicken and Rib Plate. Dining guests who order meal combos will get a P100 Kenny Rogers gift check which they can use for their next visit. All these for only P799. Call 5338888 for delivery. Promo runs until June 19 only.

HYATT Hotel and Casino Manila offers all dining dads a special gift and a chance to win in the Father's Day Lucky Draw. The pride of the hotel's Li Li restaurant is Cantonese cuisine. The Fireplace serves grilled prime meats and seafood for lunch and a five-course set menu featuring Roasted Chateaubriand for dinner.

ALL-NEW BREAKFAST

FIGARO'S all-new breakfast selections include: Creamy Scrambled Eggs served with two slices of garlic baguette and your choice of ham, bacon, country sausage or Spanish chorizo; Croque Madame, a French-style sandwich made with buttered potato bread, ham and a sunny-side up egg; Spanish Torta, a classic Spanish omelette, filled with diced country sausages sautéed with bell peppers; French Mushroom Omelette, filled with Shitake mushrooms and cheese then folded over, served with two slices of garlic baguette and a side salad; Filled French Toast, two hearty French toast sandwiches filled with ham, cheese and strawberry jam; and Croissants, three light and buttery mini-croissants, served with butter, strawberry jam and orange marmalade.

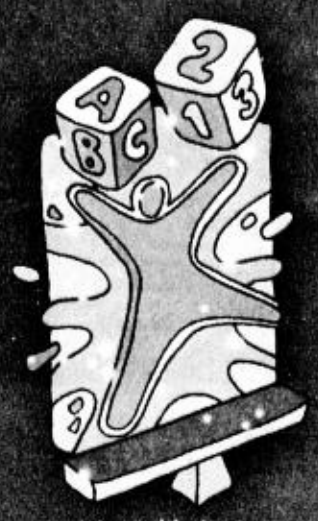
Exploring the School Zone

with Raffy Reloza, M.A.

Child Psychologist and Early Education Expert

Better Vision. Better Brain. Better Learning

Pick from a pack of preschools



The little bundle of joy you brought home is now a bundle of energy tearing around the house. It's time to choose a preschool that will provide the right environment to make your child feel enthusiastic about mastering new skills.

Here's a quick guide to the quest for the preschool that's perfect for preparing your child to a life of advance learning:

1. Do your homework early. Look into multiple learning programs to find out what is most appropriate for your child. Arrange for a tour. Schedule a follow-up visit and bring your child to check how he or she will function within the program. Slots are often limited so start your research early to make sure your child can join the school.

2. Find out if the school is a good fit. Take time to think about whether your child will thrive in a busy and active place with lots of other kids or feel more comfortable in a small and nurturing environment. Ask school authorities about the size of their classes and the ratio of teacher per child. It's important to consider how your child's personality will adapt to the school set-up.

3. Evaluate the teaching facilitators and staff. You will entrust your most precious child in the hands of total strangers, so you better be sure they have the proper qualifications and training experience. Check how long they have been with the school. Do they have their own children as well? Do they love kids?

4. Select an educational model. Some schools' approach to learning is play-based while others use more traditional methods. Some schools integrate multiple educational philosophies. Again, you are the best judge of what is most suitable based on how you know the kind of your child's base.

5. Assess the children's activities. Look at the different areas in the room such as drama, action, and building blocks corner to get an idea of how the school structures its activities. Do the children learn independently or with others? Are the kids encouraged to use their imagination and to engage in pretend play? Do they have the leeway to run, climb, jump, yell & remember that they are children?

6. Know the school's approach to literacy. Children exhibit different levels of readiness to read. Some are motivated to learn how to read right away, while others may not be quite ready. Analyze if the school should fit the pace of your child. When pushed too soon, some kids might find it hard to cope, lose their love for reading & develop attitudes that could stay with them for

7. Clarify the school's feedback policy. It is important to know how the school's administration and teaching staff plan to keep you informed about your child's progress. Some schools have meeting schedules to update you and answer your questions. Some even have a newsletter. Know the contact numbers and information of key facilitators like their cell phone numbers, email address, etc.

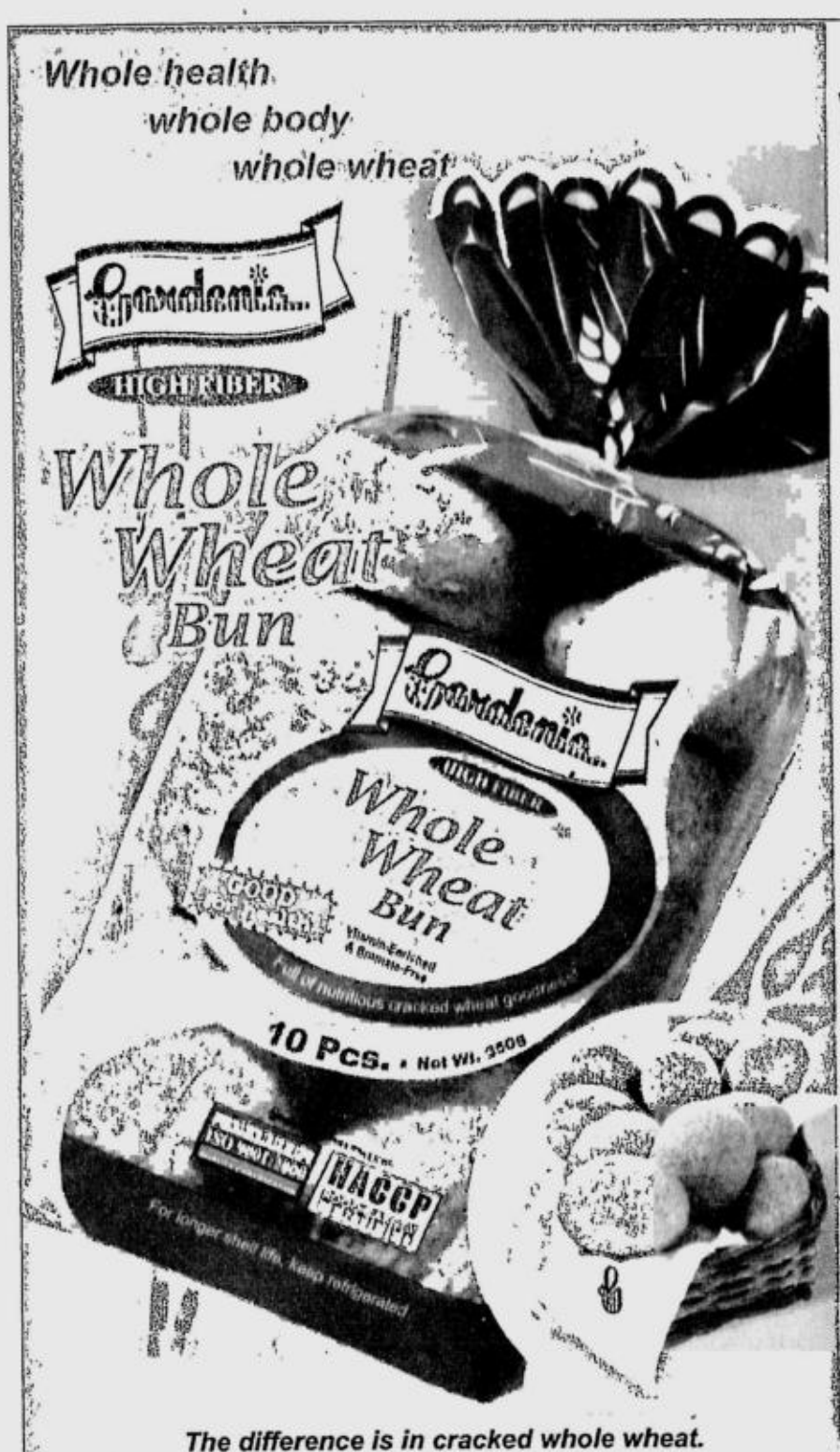
8. Check disciplinary action on misbehavior. Ask how the school will deal with common misbehavior among children. Is your child going to be punished? In what way? Will the teachers consult with you first before they administer any form of penalty? Is it the policy of the school to work with you in dealing with your problems as they arise?

9. Obtain a copy of the class schedule. This is to give you an idea of how much of your child's time in school will be devoted to different activities and classes. Likewise, it tells you how the day will be structured to cater to your child's physical, emotional and intellectual needs.

10. Get the names of your co-parents. Get the names and contact information of the parents of other kids. Talk to them and ask specific questions. This is a good way to thresh out your doubts and worries, particularly if you're a first-time parent, and will form the basis of a good support group.

A positive and pleasant school atmosphere helps ensure your child will be open to advance learning. In school, choosing a school is an important decision you'll ever make to do the best for your child.

Abbott
A Promise for Life



Cracked Whole Wheat: The Little Big Fighter

Wheat bread is popular among the diet and figure conscious, and health enthusiasts. More often than not, the value most recognized in wheat bread is fiber. Indeed, wheat bread is an excellent source of insoluble fiber that cleans the digestive system and helps reduce bad cholesterol in the system. But there's more to wheat bread than just fiber, especially if it contains cracked whole wheat like Gardenia Whole Wheat Bun.

Cracked whole wheat means the whole wheat kernel is used; the bran, germ and endosperm. All these are turned into bits that are included in the whole wheat flour used in Gardenia Whole Wheat Bun. To fully appreciate the nutrition in wheat kernels, it's best to know its anatomy:

• **Bran** – The multi-layered outer skin of the kernel. It contains antioxidants, iron, zinc, copper, magnesium, B vitamins, fiber and valuable nutrients.

• **Germ** – The embryo. It contains B vitamins, vitamin E, antioxidants, valuable nutrient sand unsaturated fats.

• **Endosperm** – The germ's food supply. It contains starchy carbohydrates, proteins, vitamins and minerals.

Nutritious

By using the whole kernel, all the nutrition found in wheat is harnessed to lend the body its full nutritive value. All the fiber, valuable nutrients, antioxidants, vitamins and minerals, carbohydrates and unsaturated fats come together not only to keep one's figure trim, but also to have the potential to give support to the body against certain diseases. Small but terrible, as they say. The miniscule cracked whole wheat kernel is truly a big fighter and a helpful ally for one's total well being.

Lesser food intake

Cracked whole wheat may be effective in addressing overweight condition. Because cracked whole wheat helps satisfy hunger for longer periods, it results in lesser food intake.

Helps decrease bad cholesterol

Heart disease can also be kept in check with cracked whole wheat. Together with a low fat diet, it may help decrease bad cholesterol that can cause heart attacks.

Good for diabetics

Cracked whole wheat, with a low fat diet, may also help improve the body's glucose response and decrease insulin sensitivity that may help diabetics.

Helps lower risk of some cancers

Because cracked whole wheat is rich in antioxidants, it may help protect cells against oxidative damage which may possibly lower the risk of hormone-related cancers like breast cancer.

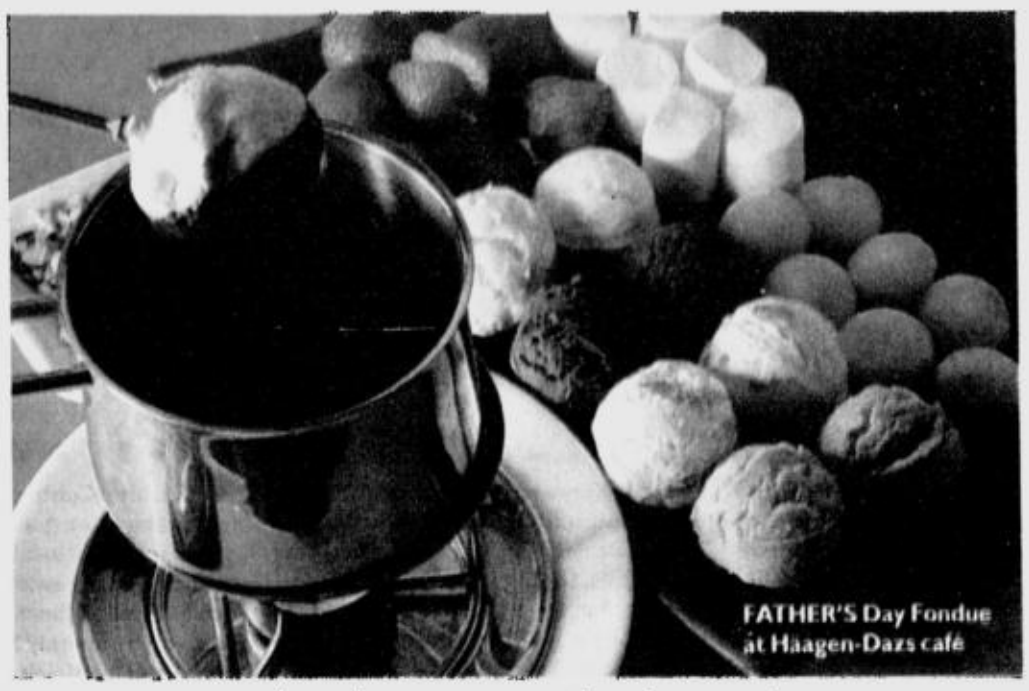
Now consider the deliciously soft and nutritious Gardenia Whole Wheat Bun. You can see and taste it because real cracked whole wheat bits are present and dot each bun with all their goodness and health-strengthening properties. So bite into deliciously soft and nutritious cracked whole wheat goodness for whole health for the whole body with Gardenia Whole Wheat Bun.

The difference is in cracked whole wheat.

It's a whole new bun to love! Gardenia Whole Wheat Bun has the wheat-honey taste with full-to-the-bite softness, plus the unique texture of lots of real cracked whole wheat bits included in wholesome wheat flour used in every bun. Enjoy it straight away, or toast it and release a distinct flavor.

And, with each bite, you can benefit from the body-strengthening power of the whole wheat kernel, complete with all the fiber, valuable nutrients, antioxidants, vitamins and minerals.

So to help keep the digestive system healthy, aid in the renewal and rejuvenation of body cells, and promote immunity against certain ailments, get into the really soft cracked whole wheat goodness of Gardenia Whole Wheat Bun. It's whole health for the whole body everyday!



FATHER'S Day Fondue at Haagen-Dazs café

Let Dad dip and dunk

DIP, DUNK AND SWIRL SUPER Premium Häagen Dazs Vanilla, Coffee, Strawberry and Chocolate ice cream, chunks of sweet strawberry, ripe mango, creamy banana and chewy brownie pieces in warm Belgian chocolate.

Playfully roll this over ground pistachio and almond flakes for a delightful experience without the sweat and fatigue of sports. Treat your dad to the Father's Day Fondue at a Häagen-Dazs café near you. Prepared from all-natural ingredients with absolutely no preservatives, the Father's Day Fondue is a healthy indulgence. Top your Daddy's Day date with a specially designed Häagen-Dazs Greeting Card. Choose from five designs.

Häagen-Dazs cafes are at Glorietta (tel. 7527299), Shangri-La (6348108) and Alabang Town Center (8092016). Dipping stations can be found at Greenbelt 3 (7577570), Rockwell (8993274), Eastwood Libis (6871839) and Price Smart Fort Bonifacio (8447803).

DADS' Ultimate Buffet gives diners a chance to know some of these mythical ingredients. On Father's Day, treat dads to legendary cuisine with Aphrodisiacs in Fusion buffet.

Treat Pop to 'mythical' buffet

DISCOVER SOME INTERESTING FOOD myths with Aphrodisiacs in Fusion, the latest in Dads' Ultimate Buffet. Get better acquainted with the flavors and legends behind some popular and exotic ingredients.

Basil, a common medicinal and culinary herb, is credited with energy-restoring properties. To the Hindus, basil is a powerful aphrodisiac.

The flower of the mango, according to myth, is Cupid's arrow. From the fruit, which is shaped like a woman's breast, flows luscious nectar.

Indonesian parents, upon the birth of a son, plant a clove tree believing that their offspring and the clove will grow strong and prosperous together.

Parmesan, like most hard cheeses with a strong salty flavor and pungent aroma, is regarded as an aphrodisiac.

The Arabs prescribe a diet of the phallus-shaped mushrooms for sexual potency.

Madame du Barry, the famed courtesan, served ginger in her parlor purportedly to seduce her guests to submissiveness.

In the middle ages, dill, famed for its bewitching powers, was the magic ingredient of many love potions.

Dads' Ultimate Buffet includes both Kamayan and Saisaki buffets for only P515 and P415 on promo days. Call 5323004 or 5317292.

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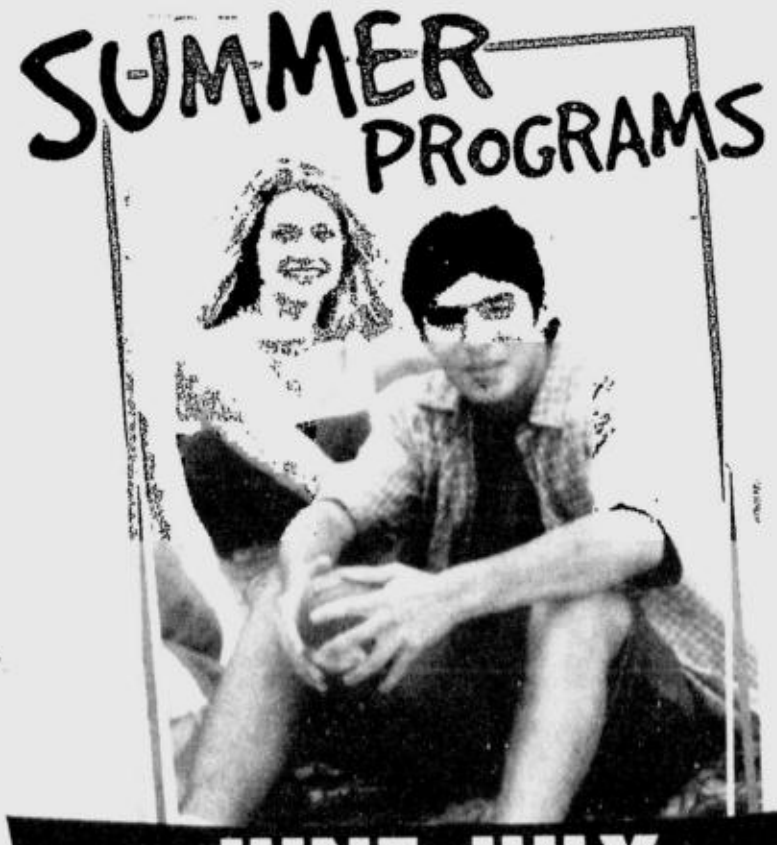

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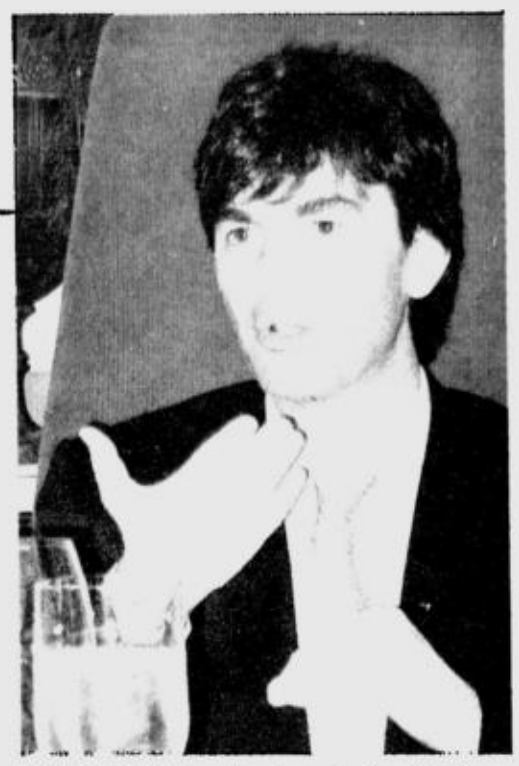
LIFESTYLE

MOËT Hennessy provides the tulip-shaped fuchsia champagne flutes for Paseo Uno's Sunday lunch.

A 'champagne wish' for Philippine cuisine

Moët's wines are a little pricier than what Filipinos may be used to but then, as part of the Louis Vuitton conglomerate, the company can only be expected to carry luxury products



BRUNO YVON, regional marketing director for Moët Hennessy in Asia-Pacific, has matchmaking in mind—Filipino food and wine.

Text and photos by Linda B. Bolido

BRUNO YVON IS THINKING OF becoming a matchmaker.

But the affable Frenchman is not planning to meddle in affairs of the heart. His brainstorm involves pairing Filipino food and wine.

And what a boost it is going to be for Filipino cuisine that has long desired to achieve world-class status. Yvon is representing not just any wine maker. As regional marketing director for Moët Hennessy in Asia-Pacific, he is carrying the Louis Vuitton name, synonymous with class and luxury all over the world.

Though it will certainly help his company's sales if Filipinos, and foreigners who have developed a taste for local cooking, will start having wine with their *adobo* or *sinigang* or *lumpiang sariwa*, these and other Pinoy dishes may also quickly rise in everyone's estimation when complemented by a robust red or a nicely chilled white from Moët's cellars.

The Hong Kong-based Yvon was in the Philippines for the first time to introduce Moët's wine labels from Argentina, Australia and New Zealand in the local market. The products are a little pricier than what Filipino wine drinkers may be used to but then luxury is what Louis Vuitton Moët Hennessy has always been all about.

And the wines Yvon introduced to Filipinos in a series of meetings, both social and business, had luxury stamped all over them.

Select clients

To be distributed locally by Premier Wine & Spirits, Inc., Yvon said Moët's Philippine office would be working primarily with people who could promote the wine to a select clientele-restaurant sommeliers (the guy in charge of wine), food and beverage managers of hotels, membership clubs, corporate entities.

Yvon also gave some basic lessons on wine storage, a very critical factor if Moët's products are to distinguish themselves as truly premier varieties.

Despite the higher prices, both Awee Sioson Ramirez of Premier and Olga M. Azarcon, Moët Hennessy's chief representative in the Philippines are confident the Philippine market is ready for luxury wines. In general, Ramirez said local sales of wines had been steadily rising. From having only a five percent share in Premier sales in 1996, wines accounted for almost half of the company's sales last year at 40 percent.

The wines go by the labels Terrazas de los Andes (Argentina), Cloudy Bay (New Zealand), and Cape Mentelle and Green Point (both Australian). Terrazas will bring chardonnay, cabernet sauvignon and Argentina's flagship varietal, malbec, a red wine. Cloudy Bay's whites, sauvignon blanc and chardonnay, are reportedly so prized that quotas have to be set for different markets to ensure that every country that wants to buy is able to do so.

Cape Mentelle is one of the pioneer wineries in Australia's Margaret River. It will bring to the Philippines both reds and whites. Green Point is the only Australian winery founded by Moët & Chandon. Thus, its reputation as Australia's leading sparkling wine producer is no surprise, as Moët & Chandon is quite well known for its champagnes.

Champagne lunch

And speaking of champagne, for those who do not know what a Moët champagne is or who simply want to have a relaxing weekend sipping good quality bubbly, Mandarin Hotel Oriental Manila's Paseo Uno now offers champagne lunch every Sunday. New Paseo Uno manager Sebastien Pequeux is often around to pour the champagne personally.

Diners can have the buffet lunch with a glass of Moët et Chandon Brut Imperial for P1,499++ or buffet lunch inclusive of free-flowing (that's "bottomless" elsewhere) Moët et Chandon Brut Imperial for P1,999++. Children 5-12 years old can dine for P650++ and enjoy free-flowing soft drinks or chilled juices.

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SWIMMING in seafood: The Red Shellfish Bowl

ALL Asian delight: Red Lobster Roll with Asian Pear

A COLORFUL bowl of fresh: Red's Greens with Oranges and Crispy Wonton

Redflagged for fine dining

Oysters are prepared four ways at Makati Shangri-La's Red: as a shooter, roasted with foie gras, with soy jelly and 'calamansi,' and simply grilled with chili pepper

Text by Margaux Salcedo
Contributor
Photos by Roger Carpio

WHEN RED WAS CREATED TO TAKE over the elegant Cheval Blanc at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel, the vision was to woo guests by erasing the pressures of having to don Ascot attire for fine dining without sacrificing elements of "fine."

These elements shine through even as Red goes through its first major menu makeover care of executive chef Christopher Romine. Word has it that Romine locked himself for days to think over Red's new menu thoroughly.

Based on what I've tasted, I can confidently say he emerged triumphant, with appetizers and desserts that are delightfully creative and entrées that don't disappoint.

Inspired

The creativity is apparent from the start. Probably inspired by this last summer's incredibly warm weather, the Starters menu offers Chilled Tomato Soup. Like gazpacho, it is a broth of puréed tomatoes and makes an evocatively refreshing summer meal starter. The chef says they were actually prepared for first-time customers who, unmindful that it was purposely meant to be a cold soup, might request the soup be heated (a couple actually did!).

For solid starters, an interesting experiment is the Lobster Roll with Asian Pear. A successful attempt at fusing Chinese and Japanese influences into the menu, it displays the inventiveness of chef Romine.

Picture a sushi roll but instead of rice, the *nori* wraps itself around minced lobster (think *rellenong* lobster). A very thin layer of lobster is then wrapped around the *nori* and this layer is yet enveloped by a very fine slice of pear.

A delicate sweet and sour sauce and a pair of chopsticks underline the Eastern inspiration of the dish. It is a very pleasant starter.

What piques my curiosity the most, however, is the Carpaccio of Japanese Cucumbers. More accustomed to salmon or beef carpaccio, I am happy to discover this very light, healthy and vegetarian appetizer that really just tickles your taste buds in preparation for your main dish.

It is also served with a bit of greens, giving it just the right amount of lightness for a starter.

Wicked oysters

It appears that at Red, each day may be Valentine's Day, thanks to the Starters selection of oysters. You have two choices: down a dozen with the Dozen Fresh Australian Tasmanian Oysters (better for a big group) or dip a bit with the Oyster Tasting special.

As starter, the Oyster Tasting special is perfect for a date because, aside from the obvious trivia that oysters are aphrodisiacs, the choices inevitably spark conversation. The oysters here are prepared four ways: as a shooter, roasted with foie gras, with soy jelly and *calamansi*, and simply grilled with chili pepper.

The last two are simple and more popular preparations for oysters but the first two made me hold my breath in anticipation. The shooter is especially exciting. The oyster is dropped into a shot glass along with mango bits and is made to swim in sake. A shot won't make you loopy but it is definitely a fun way to get chatty. And if you care to be indulgent, there's nothing like a slab of foie gras atop your oyster to feel wicked!

CHEF'S favorite: Deep-fried Cod

FAVORITE classic: Chilean Sea Bass

Classic entrees

Favorite classics remain on the entrée menu, albeit the menu overhaul. Red Classic Grills still include the famous chilled beefs that even Cheval Blanc was famous for: tender, adequately marbled, juicy steaks. The Chilean sea bass continues to be served in a generous portion and is soft and silky as ever.

But there are new favorites in the seafood section. The chef's personal favorite is the Deep-Fried Cod. It is a tower of codfish atop a polenta cake (commonly translated as corn meal mush, this is a brilliant alternative to ordinary mashed potatoes).

The fish comes with a chili sauce that is Thai-inspired, says chef Romine, but not too spicy so as to cater to a more Filipino palate. For me, though, each bite must be of the trio of codfish, sun-dried tomato and polenta so that the contrasting tastes and textures mix in your mouth, bringing out the full flavor of the dish.

Bits of the best

With a menu like this, you will want a bite of every dish. Possibly foreseeing this dilemma, the menu has choices that offer just that: a bit of the best. The Starters menu presents the Trio of Red Appetizers, which has the Japanese cucumber carpaccio, duo of foie gras (pan-seared and crème brulée foie gras), and seared ahi tuna.

For the main course, there is the Fillet of Beef and Red Lobster. This is served with mashed potatoes with a hint of *wasabi*.

For dessert, there is Red's Dessert Variation, which has a bit of everything on the menu. This includes the amazing Orange-Valrhona Chocolate Cake, which is undoubtedly one of the best chocolate cakes in the country. It comes in a small piece, like a cupcake almost, with a scoop of Sugar-caged Ivory Chocolate Ice Cream on the side.

The cake is moist with a dark chocolate lava inside, and a hint of citrus when you bite. It is not very sweet in anticipation of the puddle of brandied berries, which, when mixed with the chocolate, gives the dessert a bold, dark but sweet flavor.

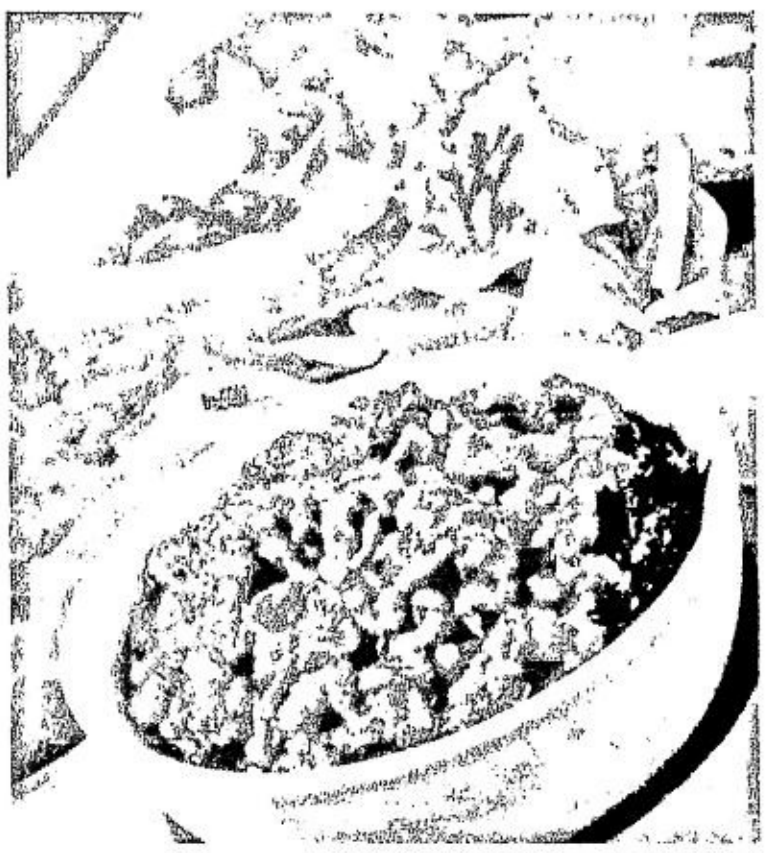
I tell you, I disappear from conversation and can hear only ambient sounds upon first bite.

Monday to Friday, Red is open for breakfast 7-10:30 a.m., lunch 12 nn-2:30 p.m. and dinner 6:30 p.m.-12 mn, and on Saturday and Sunday, for dinner 6:30 p.m.-12 mn. Unless you plan to come at an odd hour, do make a reservation (call 8138888 ext, 7588/7599). It is full even on a Monday night!

E-mail the author at margauxsalcedo@yahoo.com.

RED'S Dessert Variation has chocolate cake to-die for.

SEARED Ahi Tuna with Ogo Seaweed Salad



FROM LEFT: Beef Salpicao, Salad of Lamb Noodles, and Peanuts and Chicken Bopis Nachos

Make dad feel special

SAN MIGUEL PURE FOODS CULINary Center has come up with this easy-to-prepare recipes you can whip up for Dad on Father's Day.

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Salad of Lamb Noodles and Peanuts

100 g *sotanghon* noodles
½ k Monterey Lamb Tapa, cut into strips
Magnolia Nutri Oil
Dressing:
2 ½ tbsp fish sauce
4 tbsp water
1 ½ tbsp sugar
1 ½ tbsp lime
1 pc *labuyo*, cut into four
½ c celery, sliced diagonally
½ c leeks, sliced diagonally
½ pc red bell pepper, sliced into strips
¼ c coriander leaves (*wansoy*), chopped
½ c roasted unsalted peanuts, roughly chopped

Place *sotanghon* noodles in a bowl and cover with boiling or hot water. Allow to stand for 4 minutes or until soft; drain and set aside. Fry lamb *tapa* in oil until done, about 5 minutes. Set aside.

For the dressing, combine all ingredients and mix until sugar is completely dissolved. Set aside.

In a pan, sauté celery, leeks and bell peppers and cook for at least 3 minutes then set aside.

To assemble salad, toss *sotanghon* noodles and sautéed vegetables in the prepared dressing. Place noodles in a plate and top with fried lamb *tapa*. Sprinkle with chopped *wansoy* and nuts.

Makes 2 servings.

Beef Salpicao

½ k Monterey beef tenderloin, cubed
2 tbsp hot sauce
3 tbsp liquid seasoning
3 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
1 tsp ground black pepper
¼ c Magnolia Gold Butter
1/3 c minced garlic
Sliced finger pepper (for topping), optional

Marinate beef in hot sauce, liquid seasoning, Worcestershire sauce and ground black pepper for about 5 minutes.

Heat butter in pan. Sauté minced garlic over moderate heat until toasted. Remove half the amount of the garlic from the pan and set aside. Drain beef from marinade. In the same pan, add beef and continue sautéing over high heat until beef turns brown. Immediately add marinade. Let simmer for a minute and remove from heat. Transfer to a sizzling plate or serving platter and top with reserved toasted garlic and sliced finger pepper.

Makes 3 servings.

Chicken Bopis Nachos

1/3 c *anato* oil
2 tbsp garlic, chopped
½ c red onion, chopped
1/3 c tomatoes, chopped and seeded
1/3 c red bell pepper, chopped
350 g Magnolia Chicken Pulutan Mix (Available in Magnolia Chicken Station)
100 g Magnolia chicken liver, chopped
2 pcs red chili pepper, seeded, chopped
¼ c + 1 tbsp Purefoods Supremo Vinegar
1 tsp salt
½ tsp freshly ground black pepper
¼ tsp sugar
1 pack nacho chips
fresh *wansoy* for garnish

Sauté garlic, onions and tomato in *anato* oil over low-medium heat. Add bell pepper and let cook.

Add chicken *pulutan* mix, liver and chili pepper. Let cook for 2-3 minutes.

Stir in vinegar and season with salt, pepper and sugar. Let simmer over low heat for 5 minutes more.

Serve with nacho chips and garnish with fresh *wansoy*.

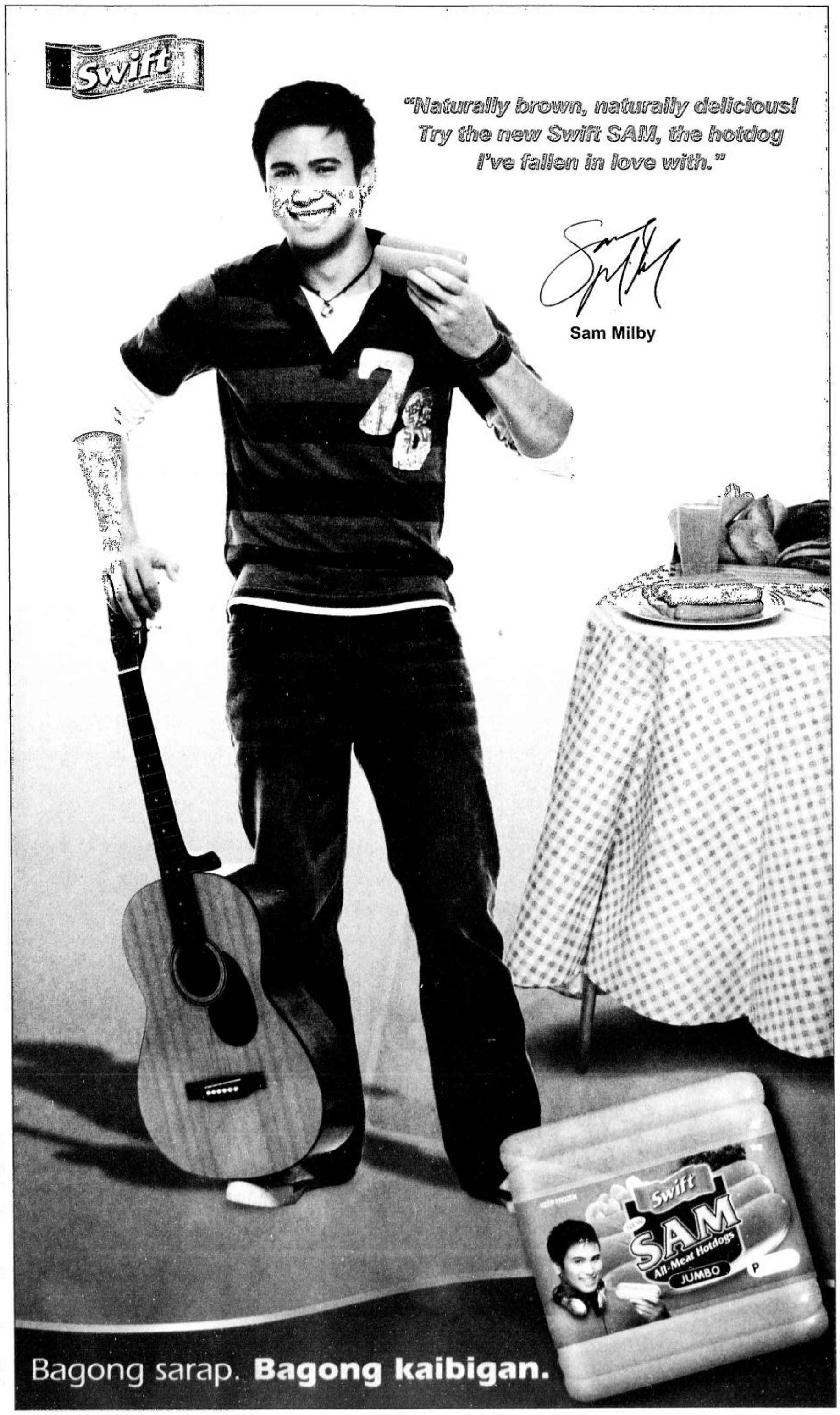
Makes 6-8 appetizer servings.

Bbq Beef Kebabs

1 pack Purefoods Beef Franks, sliced into ½-inch circles
2 pcs green bell pepper, cut into cubes
2 pcs red bell pepper, cut into cubes
1 c store-bought thick, smoky-flavored barbecue sauce
12-15 pcs mini barbecue sticks

Skewer beef franks alternately with bell peppers. Cook in preheated grill. Brush generously with barbecue sauce.

Makes 8-10 servings.



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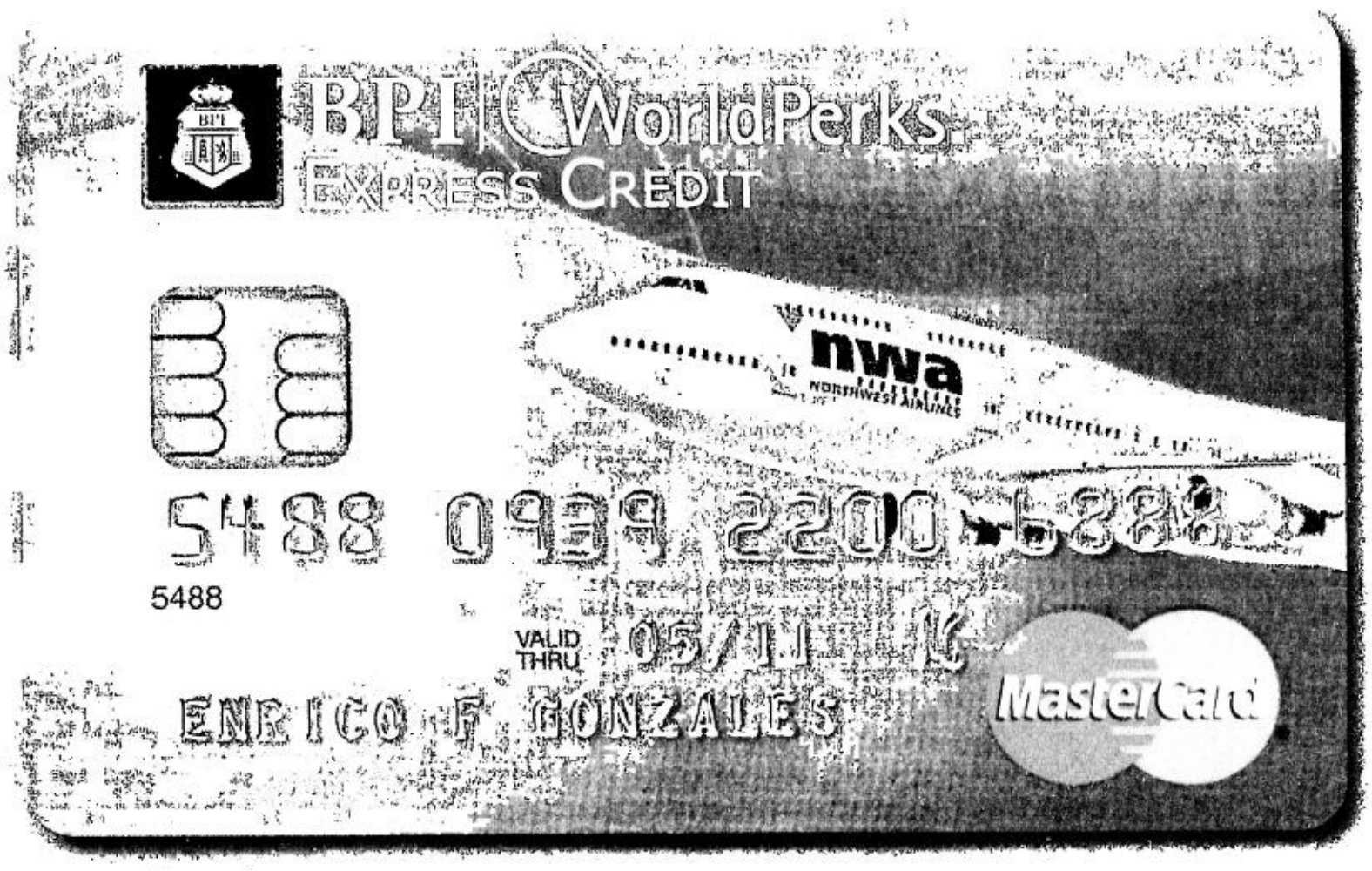

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How Filipinos eat

WHERE there's *inihaw na baboy*, there's the *sawsawan* of *suka* (Ilocos variety) with chili.

Using a fork and a spoon for dining may be the least strange of the Pinoy's ways of dining

BY NOW THE world knows that Filipinos eat their food with spoons and forks rather than with forks and knives, no thanks to news reports from Canada involving a young boy of Filipino origin who was allegedly upbraided by school authorities for the boy's "un-Canadian" way of eating.

But beyond using the fork and the spoon, Filipinos have other ways of eating that the world may not have heard of yet.

In some places only the spoon is used. This I found out on a visit to a town in Pangasinan where I was served breakfast of rice, fried egg and *longganisa*. The table was set with a plate and a spoon for each person. I thought the hotel staff forgot the fork and asked for it. My niece, a new resident of the place, told me that was how people there ate—with only a spoon, period. You learn something new each day.

COUNTRY COOKING

Micky Fenix

Dipping sauces

Some of us start the meal by preparing the *sawsawan* or dipping sauces. A prime example is my sister who surveys the food on the table then sets out her saucers in front of her plate, mixing dips appropriate to the food she wants to eat. *Calamansi* and *patis* (fish sauce) go with her *nilagang baka*. *Suka* (vinegar) and *patis* with crushed garlic are always good with any fried fish. Or, if available, *bagoong isda* (fermented fish paste), also called Balayan, with *calamansi*. She has since added to her repertoire, chili and some Thai sauces.

Perhaps the sauce that most puzzles foreign visitors here is the ketchup or catsup. It's what many Filipinos ask for when given fried or scrambled eggs.

I did witness one airline passenger in the first-class section (the rare times I'm upgraded) who asked for ketchup and the stewardess said she would look for some in the economy class.

Ketchup was also the subject of one discussion about *rellenong bangus*. One chef suggested that we should have ketchup in the picture with stuffed fish dish. Seriously, she asked, who eats *relleno* without catsup? Then she asked: Would fried chicken be good without banana catsup? She was directing that question to those of us who grew up eating Max's fried chicken with Mafran catsup.

One expat chef, while telling us that his favorite Filipino food was his mother-in-law's *tortang talong*, had to add: "but without the ketchup." We smiled among ourselves but didn't verbalize what we were all thinking—that he just confirmed he isn't Filipino.

In Zamboanga, it seems ketchup is a favorite for *siopao* as well as for *pancit*, and is perhaps as important as the *boro de kamias* or pickled *bilimbi* that is always present at Zamboangueño meals. Ketchup with *pancit*, however, would be unthinkable in other places here.

Starch with starch

On the other hand, people of Zamboanga might find it odd that Pancit Malabon is eaten with *camachile* cookies. Or that in many *carinderias* or Chinese *panciterias* they serve the *bihon* or *canton* with white loaf bread. Still, others eat their noodles with rice. Eating starch with starch will certainly confuse culinary students who are taught that there should only be one starch dish when presenting a complete meal.

But it shouldn't be strange if you agree with what Nick Joaquin wrote in his "Notes on the Menu" (Culture and History, Solar Publishing, 1989). "We eat fish with fish, we flavor fish with fish... when we dip fish in *patis* we're dipping fish into fish."

Patis, however, seems to be a Luzon dip where the container for it, the smallest saucer in the pantry, is called *patisan*. If you asked for *patis* in the Visayas, I was told, you'd be given *toyo* or soy sauce. Yes, there is *patis* in those parts, I was also informed, but you'd have to ask for Rufina.

It was also amusing to watch a Batangas farmer as he ate his *goto* (a soup of cow's head and entrails) at the cattle market. He shared one order with another farmer and both brought out their own rice pack (*baon*), confirming the observation that Batangueños are even more parsimonious than Ilocanos.

Next, he bit into the *siling labuyo* served with the *goto*, after which he took some of the soup and cow parts then ate the rice. For these men, no roundabout chili in the dipping sauce but a direct chili hit.

Rice and then some

The other peculiar Filipino way of eating is mixing some liquid with the rice, whether broth or sauce. I did write about people pouring *tsokolate* or coffee on their rice. That was strange the first time I encountered it.

The term for that is "*labay*" in my Tagalog-speaking family. I get blank stares from many people when I say that word, save for one Ilocana who said it was also *labay* in their language. My Samareño friend says their word is *bahog*.

Labay or *bahog* is why many people like their *adobo* wet rather than dry, so they can mix the sauce of soy and vinegar to into the rice. Or the *kaldereta* tomato sauce mixed with canned liver spread. Or the *paksiw na lechon* liver sauce. Our way is like the French way of sopping up the sauce with their bread. (Do the Québécois of Canada do the same?)

Of course, the world should also know that we eat with our hands as well, and not just when eating fried chicken or our many crustaceans. A friend told me that she could tell if her cook did a great job if her husband started eating with his hands. And so it is for many of us.

Mashing my *bagoong alamang* or fermented shrimp paste into my rice until all the cooked grain takes on a pinkish color is one of my happy childhood memories. This was when it was summer, and we were freed of eating conventions and minding proper table manners like using spoon and fork.

Dulcelin Gourmet's Mango Torte
Sweet golden mangoes layered over whipped cream with a unique crispy-chewy nougatine crust - the perfect dessert for all occasions.

Try our other exquisite homemade products:

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Ensaymada
Chocolate Ganache Cake
Chocolate Decadent Cake
Food for the Gods
Irish Cream Butter Cake
Caramel Pecan-Walnut Pie
Special Fruitcake
Cochinillo (Roast Pig)
Callos, Lengua, Paella
Chicken Relleno
Chicken Galantina
Chicken Pate
Hickory Smoked Pork
Pulled Pork
Angus Roast Beef

36 Times Street, West Triangle, Q.C. (374-2165/67, 0917-535-2592)
Delicacies Village, Tiendesitas, Ortigas Ave. cor C-5, Pasig
Tea Republic, Pacific Star Bldg., Makati (with delivery) 848-0270

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See posters and flyers for more details.

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THURSDAY, JUNE 15, 2006

FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND

A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT

PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR

MUTTS

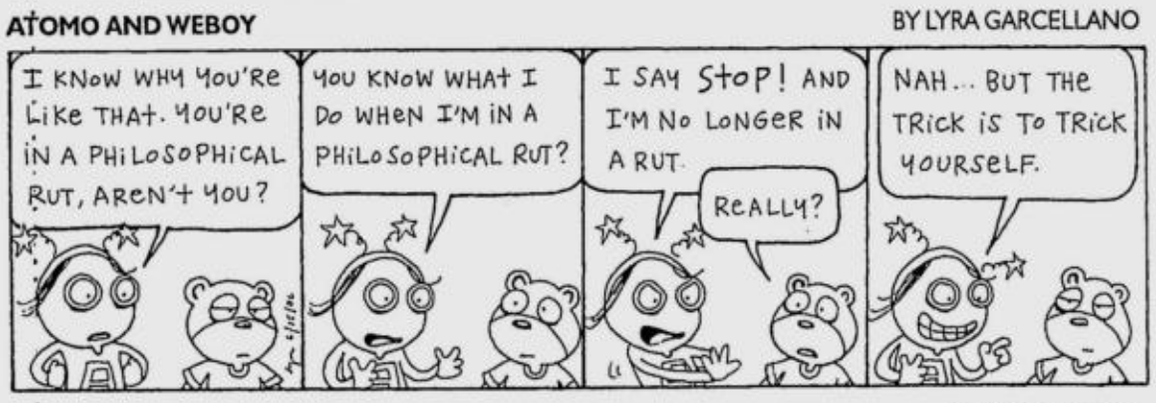
BY PATRICK McDONNELL

LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO



DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS

KIKO MACHINE

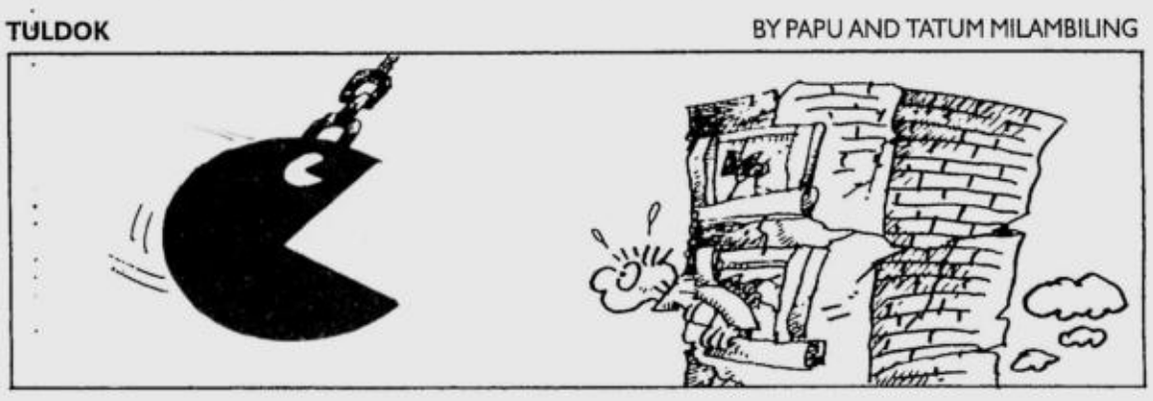
BY MANIX ABRERA

MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING



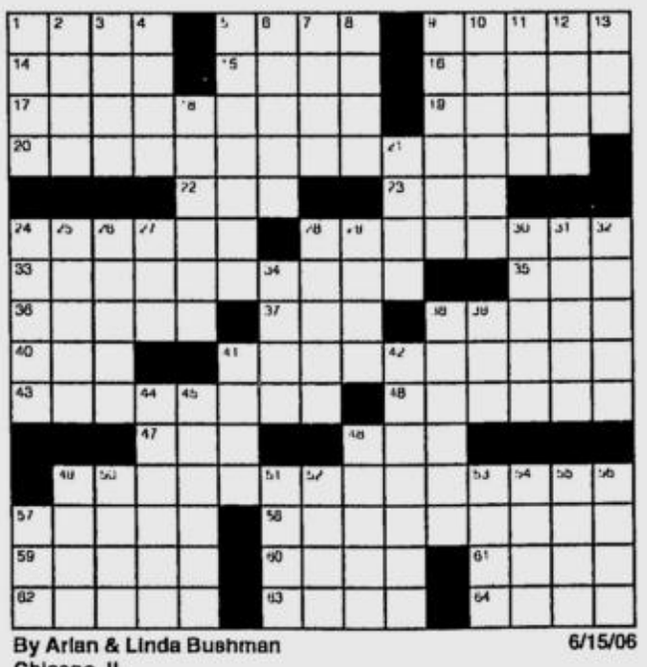
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Cook's accent?
5 Clean coal
9 2005 Best Picture
14 Nefarious
15 Foster
16 Lean and limber
17 Offensive
19 Beaming
20 Start of a fortune cookie quip
22 FedEx rival
23 Well-suited
24 Backs of boats
28 Cutting tools
33 Part 2 of quip
35 Was left idle
36 Disconcert
37 Take steps
38 This compared to that
40 Fulfilled
41 Part 3 of quip
43 Twisted treats
46 Gratify
47 Well-gotten gain?
48 AAA suggestion
49 End of quip
57 Unduly exacting
58 Antitheses
59 Slack off
60 Bit controller
61 Sight from Messina
62 Nymph chaser
63 Beatty and Rorem
64 Entry

DOWN
1 Villain's bane
2 Fifty-fifty
3 Fully matured
4 Was not colorfast
5 West Indies music
6 Complies
7 Vegas action
8 Caesar's question to Brutus
9 Fasteners
10 Legal claims
11 Legendary Hun king
12 Buy things
13 Cut down
18 NASA event
21 Drops on the windshield
24 Mangrove habitat
25 Rome's river
26 Gladden
27 "Treasure Island" monogram
28 Offshoot groups
29 Jackson or Cleveland
30 Port of ancient Rome
31 Fence parts
32 Swiped
34 Handle roughly
38 Measuring devices
39 Veneration
41 Encircling route
42 Alternatives
44 Pleasantly warm
45 "The Third Man" instrument
48 Fleet
49 Rum cake
50 Part of QED
51 Little Boy Blue tote
52 Parrying piece
53 Varicolored
54 Director Preminger
55 City on the Truckee
56 Former Russian emperor
57 Contains



By Arlan & Linda Bushman
Chicago, IL

6/15/06

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

O	K	R	A	■	P	O	R	T	O	■	C	L	A	D
T	I	E	R	■	A	F	I	R	E	■	R	A	V	I
T	W	E	N	T	Y	F	O	U	R	S	E	V	E	N
O	I	I	■	R	T	E	S	■	■	A	W	A	R	E
■	■	■	L	O	O	N	■	C	L	U	E	■	■	■
■	A	H	O	U	N	D	T	H	E	C	L	O	C	K
S	T	U	N	T	■	■	R	A	G	E	■	P	A	N
H	A	I	G	■	S	P	U	D	S	■	P	I	P	E
U	R	N	■	S	I	L	L	■	■	S	I	N	E	W
F	I	G	H	T	D	A	Y	S	A	W	E	E	K	■
■	■	■	E	A	S	Y	■	A	G	E	S	■	■	■
A	L	I	A	S	■	■	S	M	E	E	■	B	H	A
M	O	N	T	H	I	N	M	O	N	T	H	O	U	T
P	O	R	E	■	B	R	O	A	D	■	A	R	N	O
S	T	I	R	■	M	A	G	N	A	■	H	E	E	P

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6/15/06

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: Others find you enormously attractive and charming. You're bright and clever, and you know how to win over others to your will. Because of this, you're adept at talking others into something or influencing groups. You're an excellent judge of character. The year ahead focuses on your closest relationships, friendships and partnerships. Some will finish; some will begin.
Birthdate of: Waylon Jennings, singer/songwriter; Helen Hunt, actress; Ice Cube, actor/songwriter.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Some kind of monetary situation could confuse you today. In fact, there's a small chance that deception is in the picture. Double-check all your financial dealings today

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): In your eagerness to please others, especially bosses, parents and authority figures, you might not see the whole picture. Something is hidden from you.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Work alone today if you can. You'll feel best if you are working by yourself or enjoying some moments of solitude. You need a little time just to daydream

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): It's good to help others, but make sure they really need your help. Someone could cry crocodile tears or give you a sob story. Make sure you know what you're doing.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You like to make a good impression on others, especially important people. Today, however, you don't have all the facts. Think twice before you do anything

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Plans connected with travel, dealing with foreign countries, publishing and education are confusing today. If it looks like something is fishy, it probably is.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Don't give away the farm today. In your concern for someone who is needy or less fortunate, you could go overboard. But do you have all the facts? Are others being truthful with you?

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Don't agree to anything important today. Your desire to please partners and family members is not based on solid reality. Someone might withhold information from you.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You feel sympathetic toward coworkers today. If you can help, then do so. Just make sure that others are not taking advantage of you and your good will.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Romance, love affairs and matters of the heart are confusing today. You might feel disappointed. Don't jump to conclusions. The jury is still out.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Don't go overboard buying luxurious items for home or family members today. Your thinking isn't as practical and clearheaded as it could be. (Just hold off for a day.)

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You're a very sympathetic, sensitive person. Today you might want to help others, especially siblings. Just make sure you have all your facts. Someone could mislead you, either accidentally or intentionally.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

					2		8	
		4					7	6
	8		1					
		8		7				9
			3		9			
2				4		1		
					8		6	
1	9					5		
	5		4					

Difficulty Level ★★★ 6/15

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

5	8	7	3	2	1	9	6	4
9	3	6	5	4	7	2	1	8
2	1	4	6	9	8	7	5	3
6	7	3	4	8	2	5	9	1
8	9	1	7	5	6	4	3	2
4	2	5	1	3	9	6	8	7
3	6	2	9	1	4	8	7	5
7	5	8	2	6	3	1	4	9
1	4	9	8	7	5	3	2	6

Difficulty Level ★★★ 6/14

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BUYING snacks is bliss for Jaybee Reyes (left) while grocery shopping is like therapy for Roland Joven (above) after a stressful working day. Robert Mananguil (right) makes sure the products he buys are healthy for his family.

Wise dads do the shopping

DID YOU KNOW THAT more and more men are shopping for food and groceries these days and are no longer intimidated by what was once labeled as a woman's chore?

As they say in the movie "Must Love Dogs," a supermarkets is a great place to meet men and one can easily tell if a guy is single or not from what he throws in his cart.

IT professional

Jaybee Reyes is a dad who is able to squeeze shopping at Shopwise, the country's first chain of hypermarkets, into his busy schedule.

"Eat before doing the groceries. Otherwise, you will end up buying everything!" advises Reyes.

Most of the time, however, shopping at Shopwise is a family activity for Reyes, his wife and their two children. She buys the necessities and he looks for things he and the kids like.

And what brings joy to this dad and his kids? "Buying snacks!" he quips. His pregnant wife could not agree more.

To make most of the time they spend on doing the groceries, this IT professional prefers that the supermarkets have great selections, efficient service, and full stocks. "It should have a fast checkout, too," he says in case he needs to be back in the office immediately.

Public servant

"Cheap but good is a magic phrase for frugal dads like me," shares **Robert Mananquil**, who has been doing the groceries for 20 years now. Since his cooking expertise is well appreciated in the household, expect him to spend the longest time at the food section. "If you are a choosy eater, then you must help choose the ingredients," he tells especially if you have a pure vegetarian, semi-vegetarian and a meat eater in the family such as his. This dad also learned from his vegetarian daughter to read the ingredients before buying to make sure the products are good for the health.

Shopping at hypermarkets is a delight to this groovy dad because one can be surprised at their variety of merchandise. "Shopwise has a lot of good stuff for my sports and home gym needs," this tennis and gym buff relates.

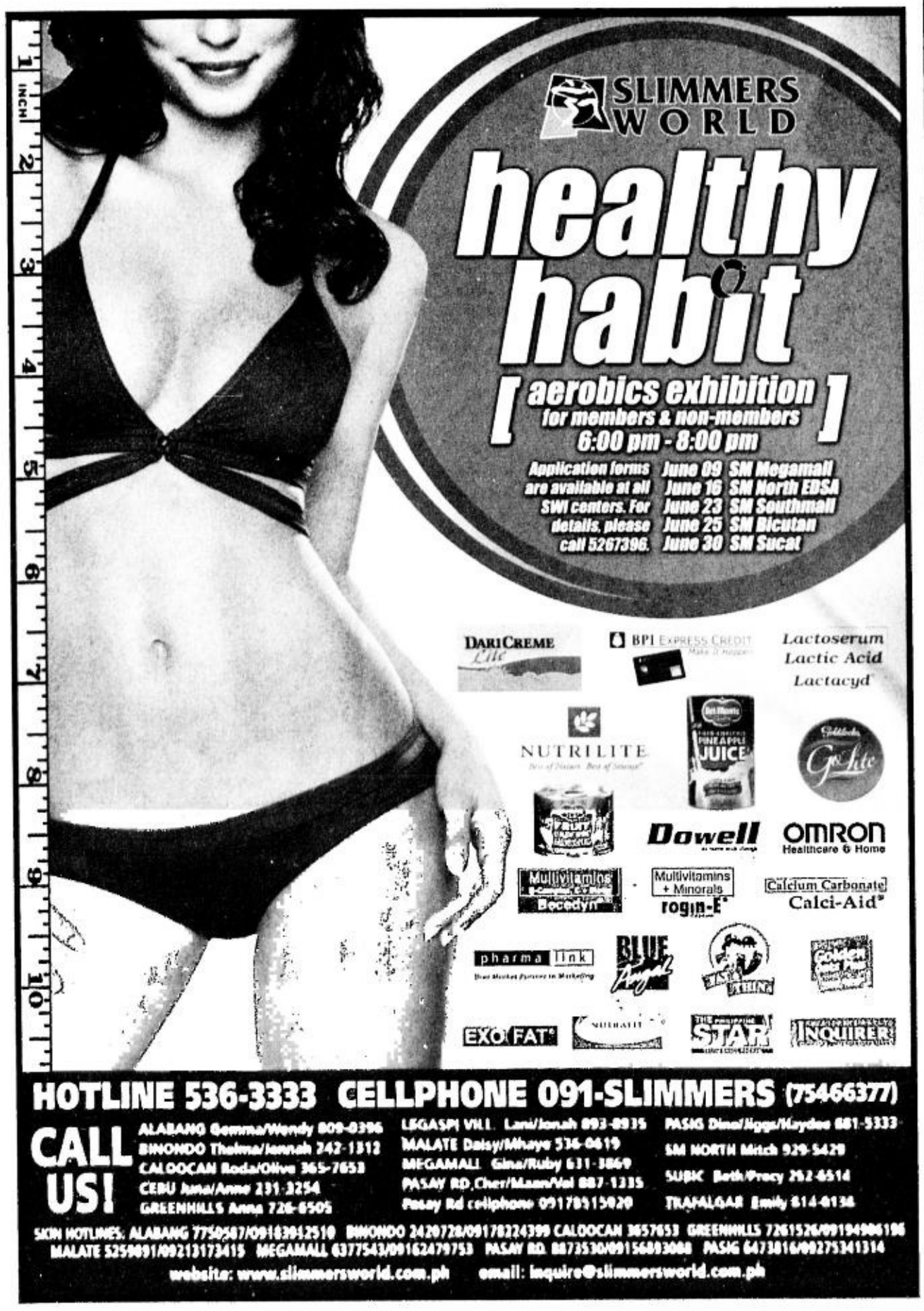
Businessman

"I guess men doing the shopping for the home runs in the family," **Roland Joven** recounts when he once bumped into his son and then into his son-in-law while doing their respective grocery shopping for their families.

While most dads would rely on the shopping list their wives make, Roland has his own foolproof way of doing his. "I literally go from the first aisle to the end," he shares.

Doing the chore for 30 years now has not worn him out a bit. It is a task he has continued doing even if his children are married now as well. In fact it is his sort of therapy after a stressful day especially when he is on the "hunt" for new brands and products. "There are other interesting possible purchases I am pleasantly surprised to see (at Shopwise)," Roland observes. A sugar-free chocolate bar rightly caps off the activity for this businessman.

Shopwise has branches at the ground floor of Harrison Plaza Mall, Manila, along the main thoroughfare of M.L. Quezon Avenue cor. Circumferential Road in Antipolo City, at the ground floor of the Festival Supermall in Alabang, at the corner of Pasong Tamo and Vito Cruz Sts. in Makati, along E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Bagumbayan, Libis, and at the corner of General Aguinaldo and McArthur Avenues in Araneta Center, Cubao, QC.



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JUNE - JULY SCHEDULE
RECREATIONAL AND ONE-DAY BUSINESS CLASS

BAKING CLASSES

June 25, Sunday - CHEESECAKE. Delicious cheesecake from Pastry Chef - Instructor, Chef Hannah Herrera will be demonstrated in this class. The recipes are Cheesecake parfait, Low-Sugar Cheesecake, Light Cheesecake, Mocha & Choco-Chip Cheesecake, Caramel Pecan Cheesecake and Rich Oreo Cheesecake. Recipes include all ingredients for P1,800.00 from 10:00 - 4:00 p.m. NEW CLASS.

June 23, Friday - CATERING AND PARTY DESSERTS. An array of desserts for the homemakers and caterers; Sweet treats that can be made ahead of time and chilled until needed. Chef Junjun de Guzman presents his latest with Strawberry Meringue, Black Sambo, Chilled Chocolate Delight, Mango Cloud Pudding, Pineapple Butterscotch Decadence and The Crepe Cake for P1,800.00 from 10:30 - 4:00 p.m. NEW CLASS.

June 26, Monday - A CLASS FULL OF BROWNIES. For the novice baker, dessert lover and café owners, here is the class for you. Chef Junjun will show and teach you a variety of brownies namely: Traditional, Coffee Blond, Marble, White Chocolate Chocochip Blondies and Strawberry Blondies. All ingredients are included for P1,500.00 from 1:00 - 4:00 pm.

July 03, Friday - CHEESECAKES; WITH A DIFFERENCE. Chef & Food Columnist Adoree Chong-Uy will present new ways to prepare cheesecakes. Recipes include Ube Mousse Cheesecake, Langka Cheesecake, Mango Cheesecake, Dalandan Curd Cheesecake, Pandan Cheesecake and Green Tea Cheesecake for P1,800.00 including all ingredients from 10:00 - 4:00 p.m.

July 10, Monday - BASIC BREAD MAKING Master Baker from Australia Mike Rossiter will teach you the secrets of successful breadmaking for White Bread, Pan De Sal, Francis Rolls and European Bread Rolls. One on one instruction. Recipes include all ingredients. P1,500.00 from 10:00 - 4:00 p.m

July 11, Tuesday - ADVANCED BREAD MAKING Master Baker from Australia Mike Rossiter teaches you the secrets of successful breadmaking for French Baguette, English Brown Bread, Cinnamon Raisin Bread, Walnut & Sultana Bread. One on one instruction. Recipes include all ingredients. P1,500.00 from 10:00 - 4:00 p.m

July 12, Wednesday - CROISSANT & DANISH PASTRIES. Master Baker from Australia Mike Rossiter teaches you the secrets of successful Croissant and Danish Pastry making. Learn how to make successful Croissants and mouth watering varieties of Danish Pastry.. One on one instruction. Recipes include all ingredients P1,500.00 from 10:00 - 4:00 p.m. NEW CLASS.

July 14, Friday - THE QUICHE CLASS. Pastry Chef - Instructor, Chef Hannah Herrera will be demonstrating classic pastry dough making in this Quiche Class. The recipes are Quiche Lorraine, Brie and Chive Quiche, Caramelized Onion and Feta Quiche, Roasted Bell Pepper Quiche and Smoked Salmon Quiche for P1,800.00 including all ingredients from 10:00 - 4:00 p.m NEW CLASS.

COOKING CLASSES

June 16, Friday - TEAHOUSE SPECIALTIES 1. Take the specialties of the best teahouses from Chef Gene Gonzalez and prepare them in your kitchen - simply! Recipes include Spicy Eggplant In Pot, Braised Soy Beef, Shrimp Dumpling, Amoy Lumpia, Drunken Chicken and Favorite Lemon Chicken for P1,800.00 from 10:00 - 3:00 p.m.

June 18, Sunday - JAPANESE NOODLES AND RICE TOPPINGS. Chef Hiromi Ogino will be teaching us new set of recipes from her hometown, the recipes include Green Tea Tofu Mousse, Mix Tempura, Tendon (Tempura Rice Topping), Tempura Soba (Hot Buckwheat Noodles with Tempura), Zaru Soba (Cold Buckwheat Noodles), Nobeyaki Udon (Noodles in Hot Pot) and Gyudon (Beef Bowl) from 11:00 - 3:00 p.m. for P1,800.00. NEW CLASS.

June 20, Tuesday - FAMILY AND PARTY TABLE DELIGHTS 2. Sequel to Chef Lawrence's family and party table delights 1, here's another set of recipes that everyone will enjoy to cook for the whole family. Recipes are Whole Lapu-lapu with Sauce Chantilly, Roast Chicken with Celery and Ham Stuffing, Roast Crispy Pork Ribs with Apricot and Peach Sauce, Harvest Salad with Red Raspberry Dressing, Baked Stuffed Mushrooms, Pasta Negra with Baby Squid and Apple Crumble with Butter Veloute and Vanilla Ice Cream for P2,000.00 from 11:00 - 3:00 p.m NEW CLASS.

June 21, Wednesday - CATERING AND ENTERTAINING SPECIALS. Let Chef Gino teach you recipes and costings that can be used for Catering events and parties. Recipes include Waldorf Salad, Mixed Mushroom Parmesan Pasta, Chicken Croquettes with Honey Mustard Garlic Sauce, Lapu-lapu with Caper Buerre Blanc, Pork Roast Stuffed with Port Wine Gravy and Mango Crepe Surprise for P2,000.00 from 10:00 - 4:00 p.m.

June 27, Tuesday - THE MEXICAN TABLE. Let Chef Gino Gonzalez captivate you with his Mexican dishes that is perfect for entertaining and it might even be your next food business. Recipes include Burrito, Cheese and Pepper Flautas, Fresh Salsa, Mango Salsa, Roasted Tomato Salsa, Carnitas, Prawns with Almond Sauce and Garbanzo and a bonus recipe of Sangria. The fee for this class is P1,800.00 including all ingredients from 11:00 - 3:00 p.m. NEW CLASS.

June 28, Wednesday - PIZZA & PASTA WORKSHOP. Café Ysabel Chef, Chef Toto Erfe will be teaching us basic pizza and pasta dough with sauces that can be used on pizza and on pasta at the same time. Recipes include Sausages and Caramelized Onion, Pesto-Tomato with Peppered Shrimp Sauce, Bacon and Cheeseburger Sauce, Truffle Scented Three Mushroom Sauce, Pepperoni, Salami and Roasted Pepper Sauce and Classic Puttanesca Sauce. The fee of P1,800.00 includes all ingredients from 11:00 - 4:00 p.m.

July 02, Sunday - DELICIOUS & HEALTHY SNACKS. Delicious and healthy snacks will be demonstrated by our Pastry Chef Hannah Herrera for us to enjoy and learn. The recipes are Whole Wheat Crackers, White Saltine Crackers, Black and White Healthy Crackers, Smoked Salmon Pate, Mushroom Pate, Basil pesto and Tomato-Basil Tapenade for P1,500.00 from 10:00 - 3:00 p.m. NEW CLASS.

July 03, Monday - SIMPLE CHINESE MEAL FOR THE HOME 1. Learn exotic flavors and delicious meals with just stir-fry method from Chef Gene's travel collection. Recipes include Black Sauce Spareribs, Three Colored Eggs, Steamed Crabs with Eggs, Oyster Omelet with Fermented Bean Curd, Spicy Dry Chicken Curry and Salted Fish and Chicken Fried Rice for P1,800.00 including all ingredients from 11:00 - 3:00 p.m

July 04, Tuesday - CATERING AND ENTERTAINING SPECIALS 2. Once again, Chef Gino will teach you more recipes that's good for Catering events and parties. Recipes include Grape, Olive and Anchovy Salad; Beef Lasagna; Seabass Meuniere Braised in Sauce Nantua; Gino's Baby Back Ribs; Potatoes Dauphinoise and Dolce Tostada for P2,000.00 including all ingredients from 10:00 - 4:00 p.m

July 09, Sunday - ASSORTED SUSHI CLASS. A New class from Chef Hiromi Ogino, she will be teaching us 15 Kinds of Maki and Nigiri (California Maki, Kappa Maki, Tekka Maki, Kani Maki, Tamago Maki, Unagi Maki, Ebi Maki, Sea Chicken Maki, Kani Salad Gunkan Maki, Ebiko, Gunkan Maki, Spicy Tuna Gunkan Maki, Maguro Nigiri, Kani Nigiri, Tamago Nigiri, Unagi Nigiri, Ebi Nigiri and Futo Maki), Chawan Mushi (Savory Custard) and Tonjiru (Pork and Vegetables Miso Soup) for P1,800.00 from 11:00 - 3:00 p.m. NEW CLASS.

July 13, Thursday - DELICIOUS AND SIMPLE FRENCH DISHES. Gourmet's Palate Chef Betina Legarda, our Spanish teacher will teach us delicious and simple French dishes. The recipes are Soupe De Onion (My Favorite French Onion Soup), Mousse De Foie De Volaille (Chicken Liver Mousse, Served with Onion Marmalade, Filets de Sole à la Normandy (Sole with Prawns and Mussels), Thon St Rémy (Tuna with Garlic, Tomatoes and Herbs), Medallions de Pore au Camembert (Pork Slices with Camembert Cheese), Mousse au Chocolat (Chocolate Mousse in Demitasse Cups) from 10:00 - 2:00 p.m. for P1,800.00 including all ingredients. NEW CLASS.

July 26, Wednesday - THAI FAVORITES 1. Bangkok Chef Chariya Thaikupt will teach her favorite Thai dishes like Tom Yum, Pad Thai, Chicken Pandan, Chicken Green Curry and Inko in Pandan leaves. P1,500.00 including all ingredients from 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

July 27, Thursday - THAI FAVORITES 2. The recipes from Thai Chef Chariya Thaikupt, Tom Kha Talay, Bagoong Rice, Roasted Duck Curry, Crispy Catfish with Green Mango Salad, Thai Halo-halo at P1,500.00 from 1:00 - 4:00 p.m Recipes include all ingredients

OTHER CLASSES OFFERING

FOOD STYLING WORKSHOP - Watch out for the schedule of our 7 days Food Styling Workshop with Chefs Gino, Gene and Junjun plus a lecture from one of the top Food Stylist in town. For more details on workshop dates, registration fees and other requirements please call. 725-5089, 726-9326 and look for Marilyn Espino and Glady Zamora.

FOOD WRITING WORKSHOP - Learn the generalized rules of being a food critique with a sense of responsibility in the Philippine setting. You will learn that perfect composition of words and adjectives are not enough to document the current culinary hype, and to where your tongues and pens will take our society's most colorful culinary stories that encourages our very own cultural survival. This 2 weekend workshop is inclusive of basic food criticism, culinary demos, food appreciation guide, readings, anthropological counter-readings, hands-on writing, restaurant review, cooking basics, food coverage and eating discussions to equip an aspirant food writer the knowledge on how to be published in different newspapers and culinary magazines. For more details on workshop dates, registration fees and other requirements please call. 725-5089 726-9326 and look for Marilyn Espino and Glady Zamora

WE WOULD APPRECIATE IF YOU COULD CALL AT LEAST TWO DAYS BEFORE THE CLASS FOR RESERVATION.

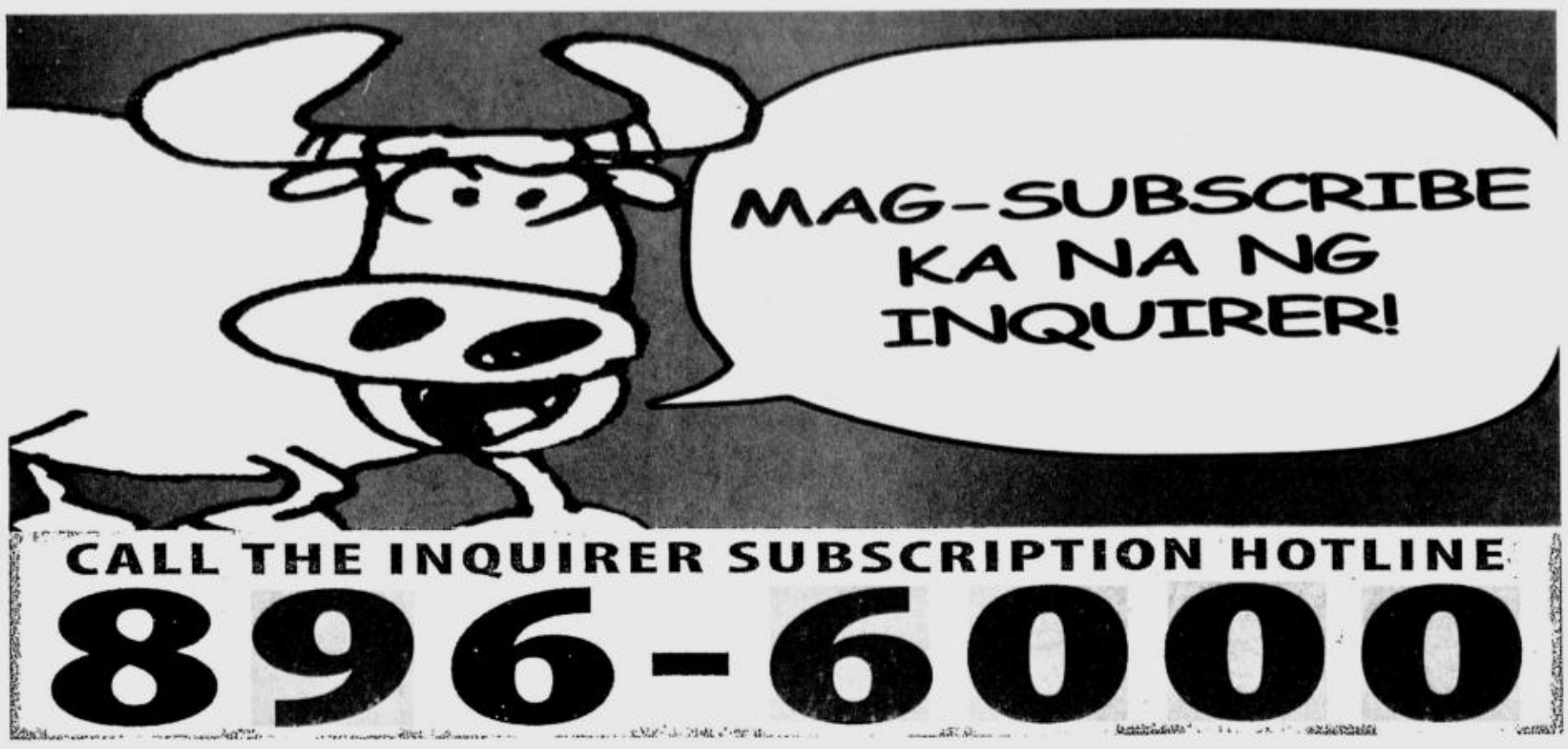
DIPLOMA IN PROFESSIONAL CULINARY ARTS PROGRAM

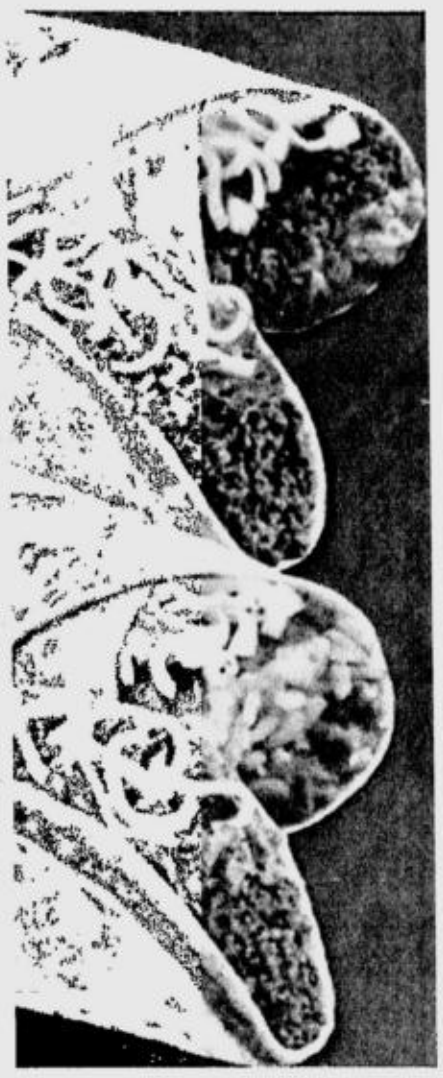
The Professional Culinary Arts Program prepares students for professional entry into the food service industry. This intensive program integrates classical and modern culinary techniques from the finest institutions abroad with kitchen management skills. Students learn how to prepare soups, sauces, vegetables, entrees, breads, pastries and desserts. They will learn how to identify, fabricate and portion meat, poultry, fish and shellfish. The course will also provide the introductory skills on Asian and Halal cooking, wine appreciation, gastronomy, table service and back of the house operations.

TESDA ACCREDITED PROGRAM. This program is a hands-on training series for students to gain proficiency in various skills needed to perform at professional standards in a commercial kitchen. The students will also prepare buffets and be involved in actual functions.

Learn the CAC's method and be the Global Chef! Our program is the only school with its own restaurant outlet and its own internship program of 400 hours and Externship or an outside practicum program of 300 hours. It is also the only program with the mostly widely used software hospitality system worldwide that gives its graduates the global edge. Enrollment includes 3 sets of uniforms, chef's kit, manual and all the ingredients to be used. **NO HIDDEN COSTS!**

Classes will start on June. MWF Schedule for 5:00 - 11:00 pm. Enrollment is ongoing. For inquiries and reservations, call 726-9326 or 725-5089 and look for Marilyn, Zac or Glady.





Big value meals for hearty eaters

FOUR HEAVY MEALS GUARanteed to satisfy a big appetite like Dad's are now headlining at Taco Bell's in its Big Bell Value Menu series.

Available at all Taco Bell branches, the new Big Bell Value Menu series offers four choices. The ½-pound Beef Combo Burrito, a double portion of seasoned beef comes with beans, diced onion, cheddar cheese and tangy red sauce. The Grande Soft Taco consists of two soft flour tortillas smothered in warm nacho cheese sauce filled with double portion of seasoned beef, crispy lettuce and cheddar cheese.

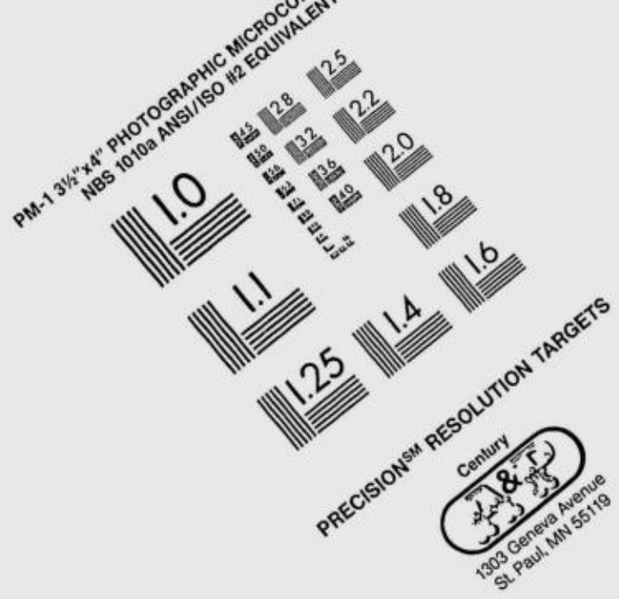
The Cheesy Bean and Rice Burrito, soft flour tortilla with beans and seasoned rice, is served with a blend of three cheeses, zesty sauce and fiesta salsa. And the Double Decker Taco is a corn taco shell filled with seasoned ground beef, crisp lettuce, imported cheddar cheese and wrapped in a layer of beans and warm, soft tortilla.

Big Bell Value Menu meals are available at Taco Bell branches at Gateway Mall, SM Southmall, and E. Rodriguez Avenue in front of St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City. Another Taco Bell branch will open soon on Ayala Avenue, Makati City.

Taco Bell has more than 6,500 restaurants in the United States.

Be sweet to dear Dad

CELEBRATE FATHER'S DAY WITH Dad with Red Ribbon's delicious "Just for Dad" chocolate cake. This moist chocolate pound cake filled with luscious caramel is available for order at Red Ribbon stores starting June 12. Free delivery for orders placed beginning June 14. For Red Ribbon's Father's Day special, drop by the Red Ribbon Bakeshop nearest you.



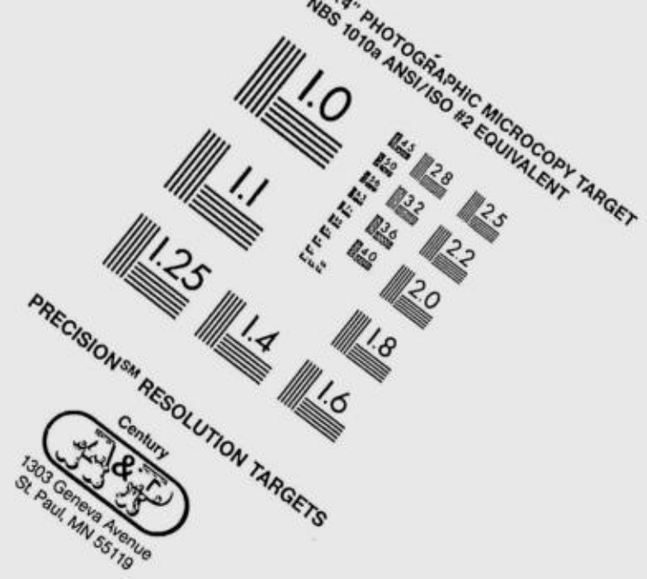
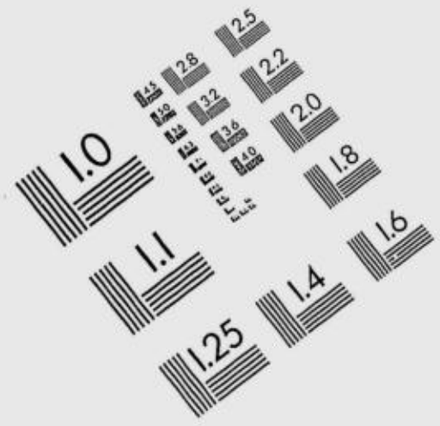
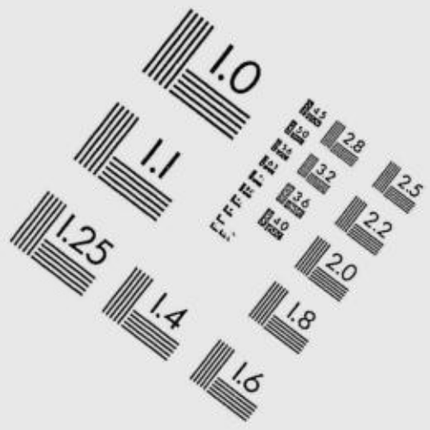
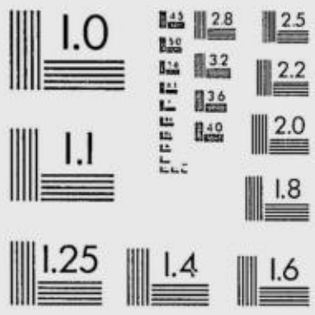


IMAGE EVALUATION
TEST TARGET (MT-3)

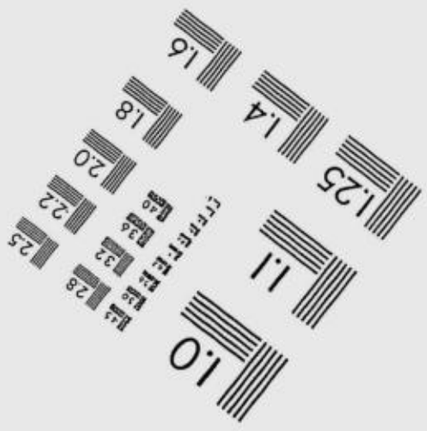






150mm

6"



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Rochester, NY 14609 USA
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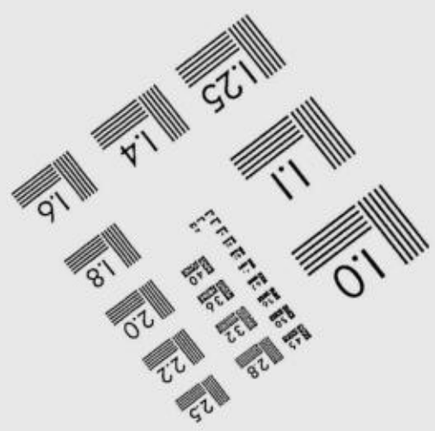

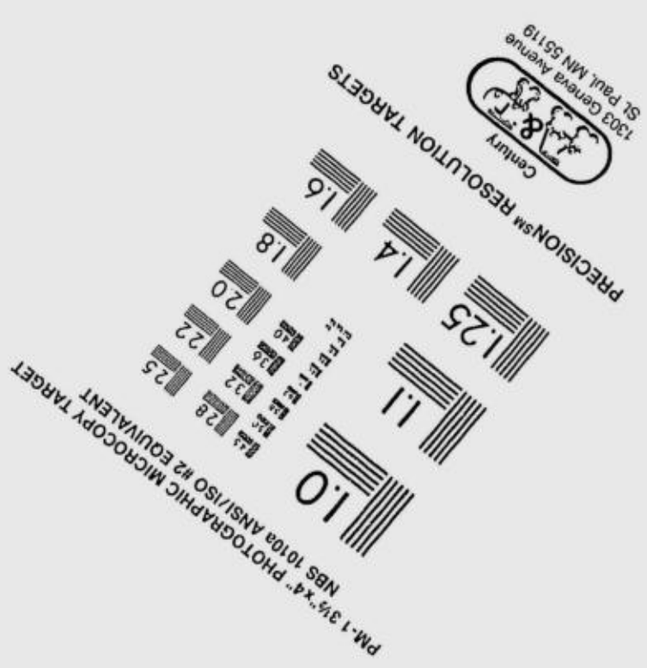

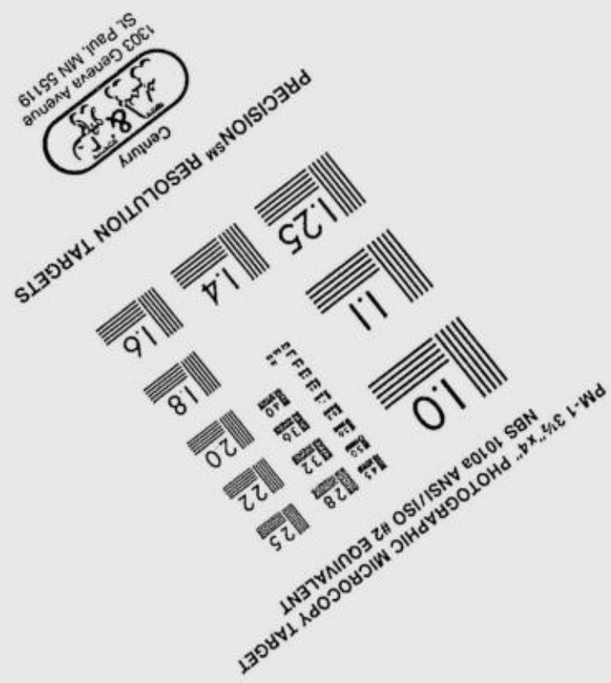

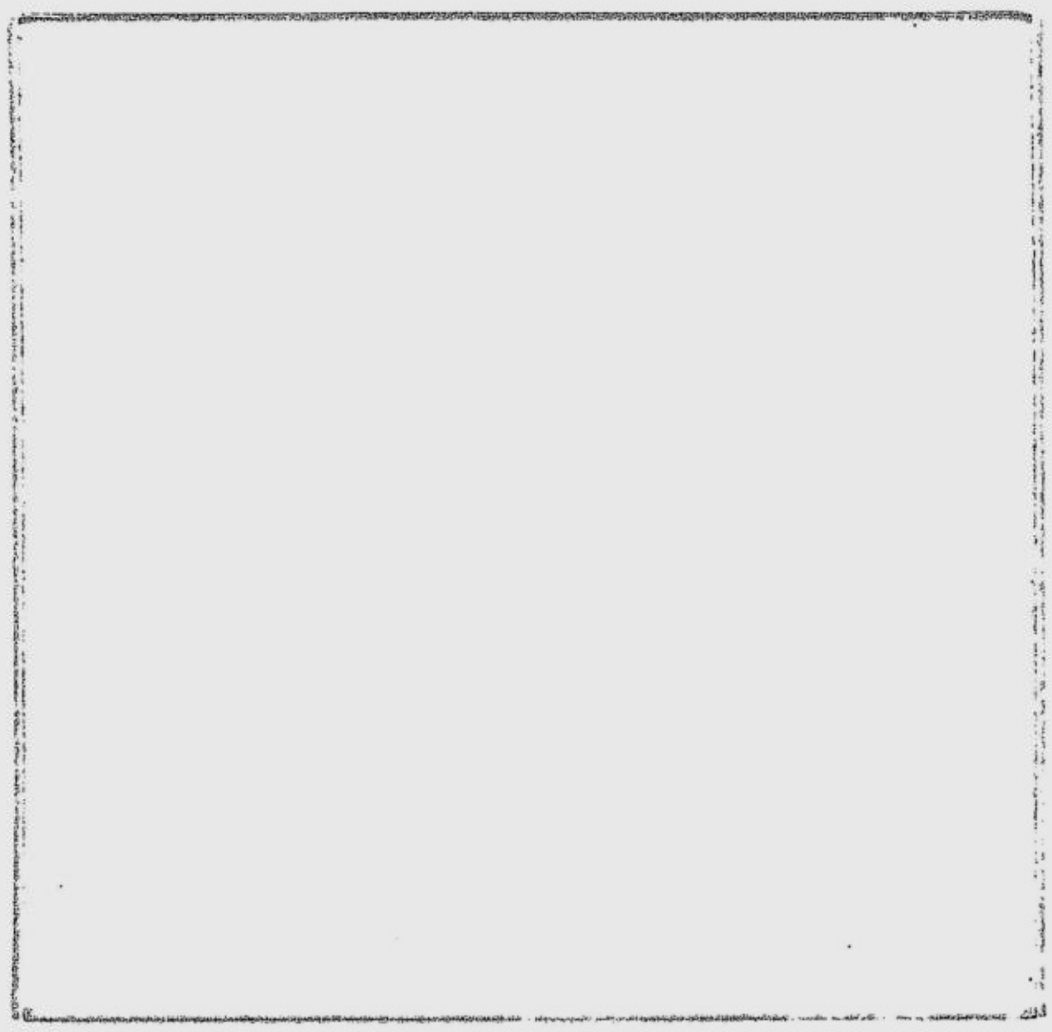

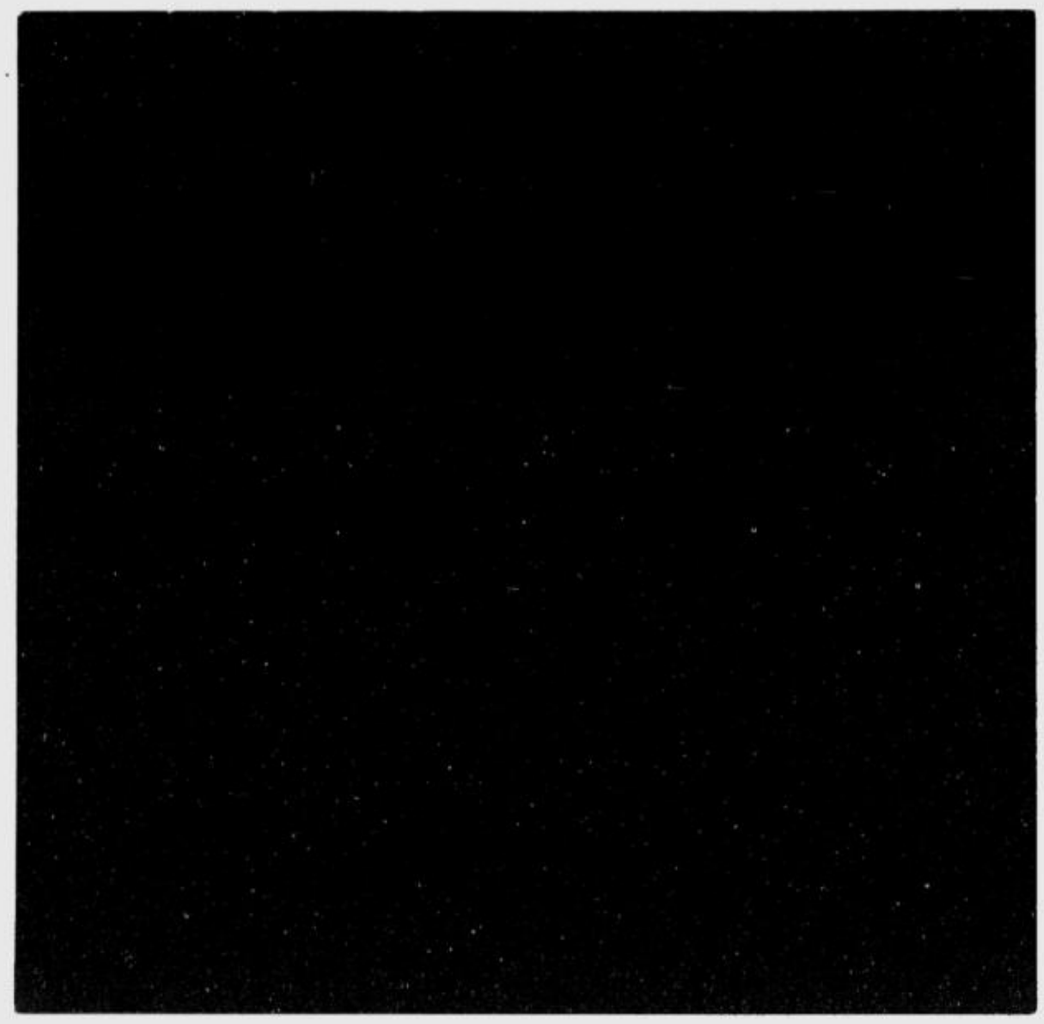

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, PHILIPPINES

JUNE

1 THRU 15

2006

REEL 382

END

PLEASE REWIND